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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

A MEMORIAL,

With Reminiscences,

HISTORICAL, PERSONAL, AND CHARACTERISTIC,

OF

JOHN FARMER, A.M.,

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY OF THE NEW-HAMPSHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY,

MEMBER OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF NORTHERN ANTIQUARIES AT COPENHAGEN, ETC.

BY

JOHN LE BOSQUET.

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MEMOIR.

MEMOIR OF JOHN FARMER.

I.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE thought of preparing some notice of Dr. Farmer, such as is contained in this volume, has been floating in the mind of the writer, like a stray cloud in the sky, for several years. But it has been suffered to remain without shape, and without effect, for the reason that other engagements have more urgently claimed his attention. And, to tell the truth, it did not occur to me, until long after my honored friend was dead, that I knew any thing concerning him that could be of interest to others.

But more recently my attention has been drawn to the subject by his Excellency, the Hon. Charles H. Bell, Governor of New Hampshire, and president of the New-Hampshire Historical Society; the re-

quest that some reminiscences of Dr. Farmer might be put in writing, for the use of the Historical Society, having first been made to Col. Harvey F. Courser of Nashua, N.H., who was also one of those who were benefited by Dr. Farmer's friendship and instructions.

More than half a century has passed away since the period of my most intimate acquaintance with the noble man whom I have sought to honor; and I have had no material to rely upon in reproducing this imperfect picture of his character, except memory and a few letters. Therefore, I cannot flatter myself that the notes I have been able to get together will meet the expectations of those who may be interested to know more of our great antiquarian student.

Justice, however, requires me to add that I have turned to the brief memoir written by the Hon. Jacob B. Moore, for some way-marks which were necessary to the outline of the sketch I have produced.

I would also gratefully acknowledge the kindness of Mrs. Catherine Steele of Nashua, N.H., in furnishing me with some facts, and in putting into my hands the letters of Dr. Farmer, from which several extracts will be found in the following pages.

My recollection of the circumstances narrated

may be somewhat inaccurate in a very few instances; but with whatever of unintentional error there may be in it, and whatever of imperfection in its expressions of esteem, I dedicate this affectionate tribute, first to the memory of the man whose virtues have charmed me from youth to age; then to the friends who remember him only to cherish his name as a sweet inspiration; and finally to all who honor true excellence of character, intellectual refinement, and devotion to the increase of knowledge and happiness among mankind.

J. L. B.

SOUTHVILLE, MASS.

II.

EARLY LIFE.

THE grave closed over the mortal remains of JOHN FARMER forty-five years ago. A biographical notice, written by Hon. Jacob B. Moore, and published in "The American Quarterly Register" for February, 1839, narrates the principal events in the life of this distinguished man, and gives a highly satisfactory view of his character.

But it is the privilege of eminent men to live when their bodies are no longer distinguishable from the dust, and all monumental records have been lost from sight. The memories and affections of the generations that follow them are the temple in which their light is perpetually kept burning. And the impression made upon the minds of survivors by their deeds and their virtues often produces the wish to know more of them than can be seen or written by an ordinary observer.

We wish to know something of the inner workings of their minds; something of how they did those

things that have made them historical; and how they appeared when unbent and unrestrained, at work or at leisure, in the intimacies of actual life. Such a wish has been expressed by some, and may have been indulged by many, in reference to the subject of this sketch; and it is for the purpose of gratifying it in some measure that these thoughts are given to the public.

The writer will be obliged to speak of his old friend as *Dr.* Farmer, in order to make these reminiscences seem natural, as he almost invariably heard him called by that name; although it is believed that he preferred the simple title of *Mr.*, and although he was usually addressed as John Farmer, *Esq.*, by his correspondents, who knew him chiefly as a literary man. And to this mention of titles it may be added, that the honorary degree of Master of Arts was conferred upon him by Dartmouth College in 1822; and in 1823 he was commissioned as a justice of the peace, — an office whose duties he never cared to perform.

Dr. Farmer was born in Chelmsford, Mass., June 12, 1789. With a curious genealogical instinct, he traced his lineage back to the days of the English king, Henry VII. His immigrant ancestor was Edward Farmer, who was among the earlier settlers of Billerica; and his father was John Farmer of Chelmsford, a tiller of the soil, and a deacon of the

first church in that place. His mother was Lydia Richardson of Chelmsford, daughter of Josiah Richardson, a descendant of Ezekiel Richardson, who came from England with Gov. Winthrop's company in 1630. The family removed to Lyndeborough, N.H., in 1803, and afterwards to Merrimac.

Of Dr. Farmer's earlier years, no information is at hand, except that, when little more than a child, he attended school in his native town under the instruction of Rev. Dr. Packard of Wiscasset. It will not be an unsuitable continuation of this narrative to introduce in this place a letter afterwards written to his mother (then a widow), containing a copy of one which he had written to Dr. Packard, together with Dr. Packard's answer to the same. It exhibits, in a strong light, his affection for his mother, and also his esteem for his former teacher.

AMHERST, Dec. 16, 1809.

KIND MOTHER, — I have resumed my pen to convey to you some pleasing intelligence. Some time in the course of last fall, I meditated upon writing to the Rev. Mr. Packard, to express to him my gratitude for the numerous favors which I received from him while attending his private school at Chelmsford. To have done this would have been highly proper and commendable; but, being restrained by modesty, I neglected it till October, when I wrote to him a letter dated Oct. 24, 1809, which I deposited in the post-office Nov. 19, of which the following is a copy.

AMHERST, N.H., Oct. 24, 1809.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR, — A profound respect for the distinguished favors which I received while under your tuition induces me to express my gratitude by writing. From your kind generosity I received several books, which had a happy tendency in improving my mind with those sentiments so necessary for youth, in order to regulate their future actions. The admonitions of the pulpit, and the admirable instructions imparted to your pupils in your private school at Chelmsford, ever led me to cherish a fond remembrance and sincere respect for so worthy an instructor. It was first under your care (at the age of ten years) that I commenced the study of English grammar, and I have abundant reason to return my thanks for your kind and affectionate attention. About eighteen months after my father removed to Lyndeborough, I was put under the care of a merchant of this town, with whom I have resided ever since. I have enjoyed many advantages, but have never attended school until the last spring; when, on account of the obstruction of business in the store, I commenced the study of the Latin language at the public school in this town, under the care of Mr. N. K. Clough, and have now arrived at the eighth book of Virgil's Æneid. It must be considered, however, that I have had to encounter the embarrassments resulting from studying in the store, and attending to the little business necessary to be transacted. These circumstances have deprived me of the privilege of devoting so much time to my studies as I could wish, and to them may be attributed the slow proficiency I have made. The object of my studying Latin is, not to prepare for a collegiate education, but merely to improve every opportunity which may conduce to my future advantage.

It may not be improper to relate something concerning my

father's family. They resided in Lyndeborough for the space of two years; and in November, 1806, they removed to Merrimack, N.H., where they continue to dwell, enjoying the conveniences of life. My father often speaks of you with respect, and, no doubt, would join his respects with mine if present. My mother enjoys her health much better for years past than formerly. My grandmother Richardson was well the last time I heard from Chelmsford, as were also my other friends and relations. I ought to apologize, reverend sir, for my presumption in thus writing, and beg you to consider it as an effusion of gratitude to one from whom I have received many pleasing counsels and instructions, which, being impressed on my mind in youth, I hope will never be effaced by time.

Believe me, sir, to be, with the greatest deference and respect, your pupil and obedient servant,

JOHN FARMER.

REV. H. PACKARD.

To his mother he continues, —

After my return from Chelmsford, I visited the post-office, and the post-master presented me with a letter from the Rev. Mr. Packard. The following is a copy of it. It presents some of the choicest and most needful advice.

WISCASSET, Dec. 4, 1809.

MY YOUNG FRIEND, — I received your letter with emotions of joy and gratitude. I recollect with pleasure Deacon Farmer's family, and, among other pupils, recognize you. If any of my friendly and religious counsels, or any books I put into your hand, made deep and lasting impressions upon your tender mind, you will join with me in giving praise and glory to God and the Redeemer. I can say of my pupils, as St. John

did of those he had converted to the Christian faith, "I have no greater joy than seeing them walking in the truth." You write like a young man of principle, of a regular and conscientious life. I hope you do effectually remember your Creator, and daily acknowledge and seek his favor. Virtuous youth leads on to stable and useful manhood, and manhood conducted upon right principles advances with regular and graceful steps to respectable and tranquil age. I entreat you, by the bonds of friendly regard, and by whatever is important in religion and solemn in eternity, to acquaint yourself with God at this interesting period of your life, and live in virtue; that whatever occupation you follow, and wherever your lot may be cast, you may enjoy the favorable testimony of your own mind, and the esteem of the wise and good. Live in virtue, my young friend, that you may die in peace, rest in hope, and rise in glory. If you read the Scriptures with attention, and meditate on what you read, you will have a relish for moral and religious subjects and books, and seek regular society and virtuous friendships. My best wishes attend you, and I pray God to have you in his holy keeping. I am much pleased with the account you give me of your progress and industry. You have already found that every step in literary improvement facilitates those that follow. This is true of every part of a literary course, and I hope you will continue to enjoy the honors and pleasures of progress. If you have no idea of a college education, it might perhaps be as useful to you to make yourself more acquainted with branches which you have partially pursued, with geography and history. The constitutions of State governments, and that of our country, deserve the careful attention of youth. Some of your leisure hours may be profitably employed in tracing the origin and progress of the wars in the Eastern world; the

calamities of which have already destroyed some of the fairest and best portions of that extensive continent, and the thunders of which roll upon the ocean. Just ideas of the various evils of war should be lodged in the breast of every young American. Do write me again, when you have opportunity, and express my friendly regards to your father's family. I am, my friend, grateful for your respectful notice.

H. PACKARD.

We can scarcely conceive of Dr. Farmer as ever having been a boy. At least, we feel compelled to place him with that small class of boys who are always men. He may have handled the base-ball club, and tried his skill at standing upon a pair of skates; but he inherited a prevailing weakness of body, which, with his mild and amiable disposition, and the whole make-up of his mental and physical constitution, would seem to have placed a great distance between him and the athlete, and rendered it impossible that there should be any roughness in his character.

In 1805 he left his father's house, and went to Amherst, N.H.; and that town was his home for about sixteen years, during the first five of which he was employed as clerk in the store of Nathan Kendall, Esq., by whom his love for books was greatly encouraged and stimulated. Of the succeeding eleven years, the greater part was spent in teaching, — a vocation for which he possessed a peculiar aptness, and an

equal degree of fondness. And, while he was teaching others, he never ceased to be a student himself.

And it appears, that, during the latter part of this period, he decided upon preparing himself for the medical profession, and, with that end in view, placed himself under the instruction of the learned and skillful Matthias Spalding, M.D.; but, after a time, he abandoned the undertaking, judging himself physically disqualified for the hardships of a physician's life.

III.

LYCEUM. — LETTERS. — ILL HEALTH.

BUT there is more to be said of this portion of his life. We cannot know how early he began to exhibit the bent of his mind towards those studies which so completely engrossed his energies in later years, and which made him probably the most learned antiquary of his time. But it is evident, that, even in his boyhood, he evinced a taste for treasuring up the more curious and striking scraps of historical information. And during all the years of his clerkship, and while he was himself a scholar, as well as while he was teaching others, the powerful current of his devotion to the same study was wearing its channel broader and deeper within him. As early as 1813, his attainments had become known in Massachusetts, and he was elected a corresponding member of the Historical Society of that State. It was in 1816 that his "Historical Sketch of Billerica" was published, probably the first town-history published in Massachusetts; and his "History of Amherst" was sent from the press in 1820.

But his love for literary pursuits was manifested in another way. While he was yet busy with the various duties of the store, a society of the lyceum character was formed in Amherst, (one of the first of the kind in the State,) of which he became an active and leading member. His unflagging interest in the meetings (weekly) of this organization became interwoven with the whole texture of his daily existence. After a time he was elected its secretary, and to his energetic support the society was largely indebted for its continuance and success.

The following letter, written to his friend and correspondent Isaac Spalding, then young, gives some particulars in relation to the society referred to.

AMHERST, Sept. 13, 1817.

MR. SPALDING, — Sir: I have the honor to inform you, that, at a late meeting of the Franklin Society, you were unanimously elected an *immediate* member of that institution. The Franklin Society is an association of friends, moral in its institution, literary in its objects, and highly useful in its tendency. The members consist of three grades, — honorary, immediate, and probationary. The honorary members have no stated exercises to perform, but are allowed to make such remarks upon the performances of the other members as they conceive proper. They have liberty to be present or absent at all stated meetings, and have free access to the library forever, by paying six dollars

for its augmentation. The immediate members have exercises in declamation, composition, and extemporaneous disputation. The probationary members are excluded from extemporaneous disputation, and from the liberty of voting. The two last grades of members pay upon their admission an initiatory fee of one dollar. Quarterly assessments have, for several years past, been remitted. The officers of the society consist of a president, vice-president, secretary, two censors, librarian, and library committee. The library contains between two and three hundred well-selected volumes. Quarterly meetings are on the third Wednesdays of March, June, September, and December. Please to return an answer before our next meeting, 17th inst.

Respectfully, I am yours, etc.,

JOHN FARMER, *Secretary.*

MR. ISAAC SPALDING.

This society attracted the attention of prominent men in other towns; and several clergymen became honorary members, and were interested in attending its meetings. The following is a list of the acting members, among whom will be noticed gentlemen who afterwards received distinguished honors from their fellow-citizens: Samuel Abbott, Herman Abbott, Abraham Andrews, Charles H. Atherton, John P. Batchelder, John Burnham, Joseph Bell, William Claggett, Nathan K. Clough, Joseph Cushing, Elisha E. Elam, Caleb Emerson, Luther Farley, John Farmer, Allen Fisk, Benjamin F. French, William

Gordon, Alonzo S. Grenville, Levi Hartshorn, Isaac Hill, Jacob Holmes, Joshua Holt, Eugene Hutchinson, George Kimball, Joseph B. Manning, David M'G. Means, William F. Morrison, Harrison G. Otis, jun., Edmund Parker, James Perkins, Robert Read, David Secombe, Matthias Spalding, Gustavus Swan, Ebenezer Taylor, Henry J. Tudor, Andrew Wallace.

Before closing this description of his engagements while at Amherst, it ought to be mentioned, that, for some time, he was secretary of the Amherst Bible Society, always manifesting a deep interest in its work; and also that while there he was made a member of the American Peace Society, to whose philanthropic endeavors were given the sincerest sympathies of his heart.

There is no record of whatever might have been the severity of Dr. Farmer's struggle with ill health, previous to the year 1818. In July of that year he left Amherst, and was absent, most of the time with friends at Billerica, for more than a year. We learn something in regard to his physical condition at this period, from letters written to his friend Spalding, portions of which are here inserted.

Under date of Billerica, 28 July, 1818, he writes, —

"I regretted very much that in leaving Amherst I was not indulged with an opportunity of calling upon my friends, and particularly that I could not have an interview with you,

in order to request you to favor me with your communications, and forward me those that might come directed to me. But, as I was deprived of such an interview, I can at this time request you to favor me with such intelligence as you think will relieve the disquietude of ill health, and afford me a rational and substantial gratification. My coming to this place was rather unexpected. The proposition was made to me by Dr. C—— in the morning, acceded to in the afternoon, and actually put in operation the ensuing day. It was, however, a bold and hazardous undertaking, viewed in all its circumstances. But the goodness of that Being who hath hitherto supported me protected me. You will excuse me for not writing much at this time. If my strength improves, I shall probably make you the debtor in future. Respects to all.

"I am respectfully your friend, F."

He dates another letter —

SEPT. 1, 1818.

MY FRIEND, — Your kind and affectionate letter of the 26th was received on the 29th. It contains an apology for delinquency, which, considering the number and magnitude of your avocations, I accept as satisfactory. Indeed, had your reasons for not writing been less plausible than those you have offered, my partiality towards you, which almost ever leads me to put a favorable construction upon your conduct, would not have permitted me to accuse you of want of affection and friendship. A charge of this kind would come with a very ill grace from one who is honored

with being placed first on your "catalogue" of friends. To have such a conspicuous place in your affections deserves my warmest acknowledgments of gratitude.

I find a disposition in your letters to ascribe motives and principles to me which I most sincerely wish had a stronger influence on my conduct, and were more firmly riveted to my mind. I beg you would forbear imputing to me any degree of goodness which I do not possess. Let it be your constant maxim in writing to me, "I had rather offend by telling the truth, than please with flattery." I consider this an important maxim, one which ought ever to influence our conduct when we write or converse with those we love and esteem.

Again from Billerica, Sept. 18, same year, he writes, —

"It is above two months since I came here; and all this time I have been at one place, at Mr. William Rogers's, on the banks of the Concord, at the intersection of this river by the Middlesex Canal. This situation is esteemed by many as the most pleasant and delightful in town. It has many advantages which no other situation possesses. There is considerable navigation on the canal this season. Boats loaded with wood, barrels, various kinds of timber, the Chelmsford granite, etc., are almost constantly passing, and all in plain view from the window where I am now sitting. The 'Middlesex Packet,' a very pleasant and handsome boat, passes here every day, having ladies and gentlemen on board. A conveyance to Boston in this way, at this

season of the year, is very pleasant, and subjects a person to little more inconvenience than sitting in his room."

Nov. 9 he writes of a new affliction : —

"The last month I have been very sick. First an attack of the cholera much reduced my strength ; then a violent cough and cold commenced, which kept me to the house for more than a month. I do not think I have at any time, since last spring, experienced more pain and distress for the same length of time. Thus, you see, I have continued calls for patience and submission, and am admonished of my own frailty and mortality. Happy are those in health who keep the great end of life in view, without these daily warnings and admonitions. I am a stranger to the sanctuary, where I once delighted to repair. I feel myself an exile from those I love and esteem ; and astonishing it is that I have such cheerfulness of spirits when separated from those whose benevolent offices will ever claim my gratitude and respect."

Nov. 20, to the same he writes, —

"I amused myself the other day in recollecting my correspondents since my first commerce with the world. I soon enumerated more than sixty from whom I have received letters, without including my female correspondents ; and the number of these you may rationally suppose is very limited. Among the number I have mentioned may be found gentlemen belonging to the three liberal professions, and some of them holding a very distinguished rank in the professions

to which they belonged. These possess a variety of talents, and write with different degrees of accuracy and excellence. Some are distinguished by facility of expression, some for strength of thought, some for vivacity and sprightliness of fancy, others for great variety of intelligence, and a few for the talent of compressing their ideas so as to give *multum in parvo*. I could not help forming in my imagination an epistolary thermometer, containing a scale of some of the most prominent and important qualities which make a finished letter-writer. I admitted twelve qualities, which were all graduated on the scale from twenty degrees *below* minus, to twenty-two degrees *above*, which, for distinction's sake, I called the point of perfection."

And he placed his friend Spalding at the highest point.

May 19, 1819, he speaks with evident pleasure of having received "the honor of a letter from Isaiah Thomas, LL.D., over the signature of the secretary of the American Antiquarian Society, in which I am informed that my name is recorded in the books of that society."

Subsequent to the above date, he spends three or four months at Salem, making brief visits at one or two other places also. Under date of Salem, Sept. 20, 1819, he writes a letter — to Mr. Spalding — giving some account of a few of the noted characters of the place. From that letter the following extract is taken: —

"At the head of the medical profession is the highly esteemed Edward Augustus Holyoke, M.D., LL.D., the preceptor of our Dr. Spalding. He was the son of Rev. Edward Holyoke, President of Harvard College, and was born in August, 1728. He was graduated at Harvard College in 1746, and is but third surviving in the catalogue. He was one of the first founders of the Massachusetts Medical Society, of which he was president for several years. I think he was one of the original associates of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and is now the president. His Alma Mater, a few years since, conferred upon him the honorary degree of LL.D., a distinction which has very seldom been conferred on physicians, but one to which his eminence in knowledge and science justly entitles him. Since I came here he has entered his ninety-second year, and a few days after attended the wedding visit of Judge White, where he spent the evening enlivening the company by his social powers, which excite astonishment in one of his age. He is still active in his profession. His corporeal powers are said to be as vigorous as they were twenty years ago, and his hearing is better. When called upon for any thing while sitting cross-legged, instead of cautiously and slowly raising the leg which is uppermost, and placing the foot upon the floor, he seems to give a bound like a youth, and is partly across the room before he recovers his erect posture. He does not fear in the winter-time to walk out upon the ice. If his foot slip, he can recover himself with the alacrity of youth. It is but a few years since he left off his skates. His dress is in the primitive

style. He wears a *coat* of light-colored cloth, with broad folds, a long *waistcoat* with pocket-flaps, and *small-clothes*. He wears a wig, dressed in the ancient style."

From Salem he writes, Aug. 7, 1819, —

"I have had the pleasure of seeing the celebrated Joseph Lancaster, author of the Lancasterian system of education, — the one who passed such a compliment to Speaker Clay last winter. I have heard him converse in private, but have not heard his lectures, of which he has delivered three in this town; at which he received the sums of forty-four dollars, forty-seven dollars, and twenty dollars, respectively, by the collections made for him. He is a large, fat man, forty-one years of age, — a man of wit, easy in his manners, free in conversation, and a Quaker.

"I have had the honor of being introduced to the learned Dr. Bentley, esteemed by some as the greatest classical scholar in the United States. He certainly ranks among the first of our antiquaries, and the civil and ecclesiastical history of our country is perfectly familiar to him. His collection of antiquities, curiosities, etc., is immense. He has, I should think, four or five hundred portraits, of different nations of ancient and modern times. He has Homer and Virgil, Socrates and Plato, Horace and Ovid, Hippocrates and Democritus, Cicero and Demosthenes. Of the worthies of New England, he has Winthrop, Vane, Ludlow, Endicott, Sewall, Prince, Willard, Pemberton, Cotton Mather, Roger Williams, Holyoke, etc., and among the rest the venerable Gen. Stark. I have called upon him several times, and

always find something new. Inquiring for a book which he had not, he politely offered to introduce me to the Athenæum, the largest collection in town. Accordingly he wrote a note to Hon. Nathaniel Bowditch, LL.D., of which I send you a copy. It has put my risibles in motion more than twenty times since I read it, which I had an opportunity to do, as I did not find Dr. Bowditch present.

"'Mr. Bentley begs the favor of Dr. Bowditch to introduce Mr. John Farmer — author of the "Description of Billerica," a well-known antiquary and worthy man — into the Athenæum, to consult Mather's "Magnalia" for some fact.'

"You know that Salem is the old Naumkeag of the Indians, and is the oldest town in the old Colony of Massachusetts, and has almost completed two hundred years since its settlement. It has, therefore, many antiquities, which Mr. Bowditch has pointed out. But, alas! many of them are too remote for me to visit. I am obliged to walk where I go, and my strength circumscribes me to narrow limits. I have no velocipede to convey me about. I can command no horse and chaise when inclination is favorable. But my friends are obliging. Mr. Palfrey, printer of 'The Essex Register,' called the other afternoon, and took me over town; then to Danvers; from thence to Wenham meeting-house, in going to which we passed the seat of that inflexible old Roman, Timothy Pickering, the man who has at last united both parties in his favor, and whom posterity will revere as one of the great men of our country. From Wenham we came through Beverly over Beverly Bridge into Salem, having had a most agreeable ride."

He returned from Massachusetts to Amherst about the commencement of the year 1820. But this place was no longer his home. June 20, 1820, he wrote to Mr. Spalding from Concord (N.H.), saying that he was at the State House taking minutes of the proceedings of the Legislature. But he afterwards returned to Amherst, and did not finally cease to be a resident there until the early part of 1821. With what feelings he took his departure from the place where many of the most interesting scenes of his life had transpired may be judged from the following extract from one of his letters (May 19, 1819):—

"To the voice of friendship I am prompt at every call. I never hear it but with emotion; and, when it is heard from a quarter where are laid the scenes of my early youth, the emotions are much stronger, and the impressions on my mind more permanent. There is no place the recollection of which is so strongly riveted to my mind as Amherst. There I enjoyed the society of those friends that with me grew when 'life was life, and all was young and fair.' That period of life when the imagination is most susceptible of those impressions which are seldom erased from the mind was spent at Amherst."

IV.

REMOVAL TO CONCORD.—PERSONAL APPEARANCE.

EARLY in 1821, in the thirty-second year of his age, Dr. Farmer removed to Concord (N.H.), where he spent the remainder of his life; the change of residence being made probably with a view to engaging in a light and remunerative mercantile business, and with the hope of finding at the capital of the State superior advantages for the pursuit of his favorite investigations.

He now engaged in the sale of drugs and medicines in copartnership with Hon. Samuel Morrill, M.D., a congenial spirit, actively employed in the practice of the medical profession. This fastened upon him the title of *Doctor*. He had a thorough knowledge of chemistry and pharmacy, but the sale of medicine was no more than the by-play to the grander scene in which he was acting his part.

Already he had performed half a lifetime of literary work. He had become accomplished as a student of

academical and general knowledge, and had made himself eminent as a teacher; but still, the stronger inclination of his mind was towards *history*, and particularly the history of *New England*. It amounted to an almost uncontrollable passion, which constrained him to make extraordinary exertions to become acquainted with the annals of his native State and of New England, even to the minutest particulars. And doubtless he regarded it as a fortunate circumstance, that those who first took up their abode upon these shores, as well as their descendants, were intelligent men, — men who were capable of recording the events of their own lives and times, and who saw the importance of doing it. So that, in the writings of the Bradfords, the Mathers, and the Hutchinsons, he found the means of gratifying the predominant desire of his heart. It is undoubtedly the fact, that he had obtained an acquaintance with the men and the events of the first two hundred years of New-England history such as has been equalled by very few persons. Nor is it doing him any injustice to say that he was probably better acquainted with the characters of the men of former times — the Winthrops, the Endicotts, the Cottons, and the Chaunceys — than with those of the men of his own day.

He had furnished articles for publication in the collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society,

of which society he had been elected a member: he had assisted in preparing materials for a history of his native town of Chelmsford, published by Rev. Mr. Allen, and had published the history of Billerica, Mass., and of Amherst, N.H. And now he sat down in his unpretentious quarters, and put his pen in motion with an energy that no outside attraction could divert from its purpose. Attentive and urbane when interrupted by the call for root, ointment, or tincture, as soon as he found himself alone again his mind was in a labyrinth of genealogical names, dates, and events.

In September of this year (1821) he writes of being engaged in preparing a new Register of New Hampshire; "hoping," he says, "if we may not have a very valuable one, we shall have a correct one. I have written, to obtain the information I possess, nearly a hundred letters to different persons in and out of the State." Before the year closes he publishes an "Ecclesiastical Register;" in January, 1822, the "Military Guide" is in press; and in February of the same year he is using his industrious pen in publishing, in connection with Hon. Jacob B. Moore, as a periodical, "Collections, Topographical, Historical, and Biographical, relating principally to New Hampshire."

The world saw so little of him, that, without impro-

priety, he might have been called the *invisible* man; and that because of no effort of his own to keep himself out of sight. And yet he was just the man to attract attention; there being in his appearance and employments precisely that slight shade of singularity, not to say mystery, which seems to fall crosswise upon the great majority of minds. Soon, however, he came to be spoken of as the accomplished scholar, and faultless gentleman, newly come to town.

He was a man of an erect frame, about five feet eight or nine inches in height; extremely thin and pale — evidently owing to some fault of the powers of digestion and assimilation, rather than to pulmonary disease. His face was symmetrical, but not without wrinkles; with Grecian nose; high forehead — that and the temples slightly marked with blue veins; lips full, and expressive of mingled good-nature and firm decision; a deep depression between the chin and the lower lip; prominent and well-covered eyebrows; light-brown hair, with a foretop brushed over from the forehead bearing a little to the left; and bright, honest, medium-sized, bluish-gray eyes, that looked straight forward, turning neither to the right hand nor the left, nor often towards the ground.

In dress, Dr. Farmer was neither fashionable nor slovenly. In the warmest days of summer, for an upper garment, he could trust himself to the protec-

tion of a flowing dressing-gown of calico; but generally he wore a coat of blue broadcloth with brass buttons, according to the custom of the day. His vest was commonly of the same material and color: whilst he *could* adorn himself, for an occasion, with one of buff or pure white; although, as regards the color last mentioned, memory has become somewhat dimmed during more than half a century of busy life. His pantaloons, too, were sometimes of a lighter hue; but the dark blue prevailed, — a happy circumstance, as quite frequently an unfortunate spot on the right side was compelled to submit to a few smart strokes from the point of a refractory or untidy pen. About his neck he wore an ample white cravat neatly tied in front. Then, let the feet be covered with boots of calf-skin soft as morocco, and the head with a high, shining hat, and you have the whole costume of the man; unless you examine his coat-pocket, where you would be sure to find a large red bandanna handkerchief, which was brought into service as a muffler for his neck if he went out, even for a moment, into the cold air. To form a figure of him with a low, soft hat shading his brow, with a face unshaven, or with his head hanging down, were an impossible burlesque of what he really was.

When walking in the street, he invariably carried a cane, — one of light weight, of an uncertain red color,

and with an ivory head, — which he swung rather than leaned upon ; for he seemed little dependent upon it for support. His heel struck the ground a notable distance of time before the rest of his foot got ready to come down : at least so it appeared ; for all that was ever heard was the fall of the heel of his boot, like the blow of a small mallet. That he was ever on horseback, is too much to believe. But he was no stooping or shambling walker. He carried himself well poised, took long steps, and his limbs seemed to ask no help in bearing him safely along. His walk was too stately for haste, and too assured to indicate infirmity. If in company with another person, he was always engaged in animated conversation. There was a bright cheerfulness in his whole aspect, as if every part of him were in sympathy with the beautiful day; such a day being the only time when he was likely to venture abroad.

V.

SURROUNDINGS. — INTEREST IN YOUNG MEN.

WE cannot well portray the character of an individual without giving some description of the scenes by which he was surrounded while passing the years, and performing the work, of his life. On coming to Concord, Dr. Farmer did not find himself wholly among strangers ; but immediately on his arrival he sought the society of Gen. Joseph Low, a former Amherst acquaintance, who received him into his family as a boarder. In that family he enjoyed a quiet home for several years. And his place of business and of study (it bore the undignified name of "the apothecary-shop") was in a building which was the property of the same gentleman.

That building was of two stories, about twenty-two feet in width, and forty in length. It stood on Main Street, east side, gable to the street, some fifty rods south of the State House, and was so situated that a person standing in the front door would look very

nearly straight through the middle of School Street. In the lower story was a dry-goods and grocery store; in the upper was the drug-store of Morrill & Farmer, the only establishment of the kind in what is now the flourishing city of Concord. It was entered by a flight of stairs, exterior to the building, on the south side. The visitor to the place having ascended these stairs, and opened the door at his left, found himself in a small entry, and, turning again to the left, entered the apartment, where he was sure to find Dr. Farmer sitting at his table with pen in hand.

When the doctor first became an occupant of this apartment, it was only a corner room with one window towards the street, and possibly two in the south side; its dimensions being perhaps twelve by eighteen feet. But after a year or two it was enlarged so as to embrace the whole front end of the upper story of the building, to the depth of its previous length. Now, as you entered, and walked into the centre of the room, with your face turned towards the north, you had on your right long rows of drawers, tier above tier, with a counter in front of them; and on your left, lining the wall, bottles and jars innumerable, looking like Continental soldiers, some in uniform and some not, drawn up in line ready for battle. Near the middle of the room stood a plain box-stove; and a little farther on, close against the counter, was the

table at which for several years the doctor's wonderful work of pen, ink, and brain was done.

This building extended forward quite to the verge of the sidewalk; and Gen. Low's dwelling-house stood north of it, broadside to the street, at a distance of some twenty-five feet in the rear of the sidewalk, where both house and store were joined together as one building. This gave the doctor an opportunity, by means of back stairs and back door, to enter the house without being seen from the street. Or he could, and often did in unfavorable weather, step through the window opening from the back store into the front room of the house. This was an arrangement exactly suited to his health and inclinations.

Gen. Low was fully the peer of the best-bred gentlemen in town, his wife (a daughter of the venerable and excellent Nathaniel Abbott, Esq.) being well fitted to stand by his side in the most refined society. Their house was often the gathering-place of some of the most distinguished characters in the State, especially during the sessions of the Legislature. But Dr. Farmer seldom mingled with the company, even on the most brilliant occasions. If he did make his appearance, he soon withdrew, being unable to endure the excitement.

Probably he had been led by bodily infirmity to prefer communion with books rather than with men,

and it seemed more agreeable to his temperament to hold converse with men long dead than with those of his own generation. And yet he was one of the most genial and companionable of men naturally. Much of the time his inability to endure excitement prevented him from attending public worship. At times, when he found his way to the house of God, he was not able to remain till the close of the service; neither did he always have strength sufficient to urge his way through the crowd to deposit his vote in the ballot-box, although he felt a deep interest in the political questions of the day.

A trait of character that marked Dr. Farmer's whole life was his love for the society of young men, together with an earnest devotion to their welfare. During his residence in Amherst, this tendency of his mind was a prominent characteristic; and, after his removal to Concord, it continued in full activity, manifesting itself in a benevolent and fatherly interest in the young men around him, — a very considerable number of whom came under his tuition at different times.

It became well understood that the pleasure he enjoyed in imparting instruction was quite equal to that of treasuring it up; and young men of a studious turn, many of whom were connected with the printing-offices, felt no hesitancy in calling at his

room. And all who came within the sphere of his influence were greatly benefited. Even the man whom he might employ to perform an act of service generally received the compensation of some valuable hint, or piece of advice, as well as his due reward in money. The young man once in his presence, he would with delicacy and tact make inquiries as to his attainments; would recommend books; advise him to cultivate a love for reading; and endeavor to stimulate him to the formation of studious, virtuous, thrifty, and manly habits. More than one now living (and the same has been the case with as many who are dead) feels himself greatly indebted for his genial and generous attentions, much of their success in life having been due to his instructions and guidance.

Though retiring and undemonstrative during life, doing his work behind the scenes of the world's pomp and din, yet he did much to give character and life to those scenes. He made his power felt in forms that cannot be lost sight of for generations to come. He wished to exert a salutary influence over those whom he knew to be exposed to many temptations. He saw in every young man a possible candidate for some important position, for experiences either joyous or painful, for achievements elevating or degrading to the human species. He would give the weight of his testimony and his example in the way most likely to benefit all.

It was a true exhibition of Dr. Farmer's unselfish and fatherly disposition which was seen in the case of the first young person whom he drew into his confidence and guardianship after becoming a resident of Concord. A small part of the history of this case must be given, in order to explain how a knowledge of the minute particulars narrated in these pages was obtained. Allusion is made to a schoolboy not twelve years old, of parentage reputable but not rich, his father a tin-plate and sheet-iron worker, living in the neighborhood.

One evening about the close of the year 1822, he was sent, with a quill in his hand, to the merchant doing business directly beneath the apothecary-shop, to ask the favor of the making of a pen; those being days when pens of steel were little known, and those in use grew upon the backs of geese and swans; and the making of a pen was an art in which experts alone excelled. The merchant was busy, and said, "Run up to Dr. Farmer: he will do it." In a moment the boy was round the corner, up the stairs, and in the presence of the doctor. He was greeted with a kind word, and as kind a smile. The doctor's penknife was always in order. Taking the quill, he shaved off about half the depth of the tubular part at the lower end, inner side; fashioned the nib in approved form; exactly divided the point, and cut it off; then slipped

the knife along the nigh side of the shaft, clearing off the web, and clipped it near the upper extremity, — and the work was done, with an accuracy and despatch which the nicest machinery could scarcely have equalled; the boy looking on with eyes glistening with admiration, it being to him the neatest of sleight-of-hand. "Now write your name on that piece of paper, and see if you like it," said the doctor, passing both pen and paper to the boy. The boy made some scratches meant for his name: and the compliment was returned, "You write pretty well; wouldn't you like to learn to write better?" The boy answered that he would; when his new-found friend continued, "If you will come in here Saturday afternoon, I will teach you;" that being the only half-day of the week in which scholars in those days had their liberty.

The boy promised, and was there punctually at the hour. The writing-lesson despatched, he was invited to take a little exercise at the mortar, pulverizing medicine. And, when the business of the afternoon was accomplished, he went away with an invitation to a similar entertainment the next Saturday. And things went on after the same order, — a lesson with the pestle following the lesson with the pen, — until the close of the winter term of the public school. The boy had become highly pleased already with his apothecary teacher, and the teacher had evidently

found a place in his heart for the boy. And now the favored lad, who had no other employment, was regularly instated as a student and an employee of the scholarly and honored John Farmer, Esq. And the acquaintance thus casually commenced became more and more intimate for many years, and was interrupted only by the death of the great and good man who so generously bestowed his friendship upon one by whom it was needed, and by whom it was never felt to be of greater value than now when the snows of age have fallen upon his head.

VI.

KINDNESS. — GENIALITY.

THIS lad was under the eye of Dr. Farmer a large portion of the time for the space of three years; the succeeding three years of his youth being spent in a printing-office in another place, — a fact that will explain some allusions occurring in one or two of Dr. Farmer's letters hereafter to be inserted. He was employed in pounding and compounding medicine, weighing and measuring it, putting it into packages, and selling it; in making pills, opodeldoc, blue mass, cold cream for pimpled cheeks (with the cream left out), and ointments many and not always sweet savored; and once he assisted in the nice little process of distilling prussic-acid; and, when the doctor was absent or sick, he was intrusted with the keeping of his meteorological record. And, during the same time, he was led on in a course of study, embracing the common-school branches, with history, science, and composition, and was constantly

receiving practical hints from the doctor's lips, concerning passing events and all the interests of life, together with moral instruction of inestimable value. Besides, he had something of the rudiments of Latin continually before him, and fastening themselves upon his mind, — in the names of medicines, and in various books and papers which the doctor had in his hands every day, — which gave him a start in that direction. And not only did he enjoy the company and instruction of the good man during the day, but for long periods, especially in the colder portions of the year, he shared his bed at night.

With the scholarly genius about him, any lad might have emerged from such a school with a very respectable education. Though often heedless and inattentive; doing, or leaving undone, things that must have tried the patience of his benefactor, — yet he never heard an unkind expression from his lips, nor saw a trace of passion upon his countenance. No, never from those lips fell a single syllable borrowed from the vocabulary of the profane or the vulgar, to the knowledge of this person, who for so long a time had opportunity for almost seeing the thoughts by which those lips were inspired.

And, when this lad had left the place, still his old teacher remembered him as if he had been a son, and followed him with letters filled with good advice and

affectionate assurances of deep interest in his welfare; the last letter received from him being dated only a little more than a year previous to his death.

Besides, the kind-hearted and thoughtful doctor studied to keep the mind of his *protégé* employed with reading when no other occupation demanded his attention. He evidently believed the sentiment of the old nursery-hymn, citing the example of the bee: —

> "In works of labor or of skill,
> I would be busy too;
> For Satan finds some mischief still,
> For idle hands to do."

He recommended books (and generally furnished them), some of which were solid octavos, like Scott's "Life of Napoleon," then recently published; and some smaller volumes, such as the "Letters of Junius;" and others of a lighter and more engaging character, as "Cœlebs in Search of a Wife," — he being careful to tell him that *cœlebs* meant *bachelor*, — and "Gulliver's Travels." And frequently, during the reading of the book last named, when the lad's mouth began to widen, with the corners turned upward, and a giggle seemed imminent, he would say, "You may read aloud;" and quite likely he would himself join in the laugh. It was, however, no open explosion. Of the broad, crashing laugh of the bar-room, or even that of the

boy on the playground, he appeared utterly incapable. With some effort he kept the lips pretty well compressed, and seemed to be confining within his agitated breast a pleasant-voiced animal that had serious thoughts of making his escape.

He was not a story-teller, but it was impossible for a man of his knowledge of books and the world not to have in his mind an inexhaustible store of entertaining facts; and he could appreciate the ludicrous and trenchant points of an anecdote as well as any other man. Nor did he ever lack the ability to tell what he knew in an effective manner. And he knew how to mingle amusement with the more wearisome occupations of life.

When the time began to pass drowsily in the "shop," he would frequently tell a story, — such as that of Benjamin Franklin's visit, when a printer's boy, to the Rev. Dr. Byles, the witty clergyman of Boston. The story was something like this: When the boy had done his errand, the reverend doctor, who had some kindness of heart, put himself on quite familiar terms with him, and in the course of the conversation learned, that, in the office where he was employed, he was called the "devil;" "printer's devil" being the name in former times given (probably more commonly than at present) to the youngest apprentice, whose duty it was to perform the miscellaneous

services, or chores, about the office. Continuing his attentions, the reverend gentleman invited the boy up into the highest part of the house, that he might look out upon the town. But, the boy not being tall enough to see to advantage, the doctor lifted him up by the arms ; and, when he helped him down, he said, "Now go home, and tell your people that *I have raised the devil.*" It is needless to state, that, by the time such a story about a Boston boy was at an end, the Concord boy was fully awake.

At other times he would describe the hallucinations of persons diseased in mind, some of which were of an exceedingly mirth-provoking character. One of these was in relation to a man who imagined that his legs were made of glass, and who drew upon himself a good deal of ridicule, and some pity, by his intense fear of their being broken in pieces by any attempt to walk, or by being touched by any other person. Then, again, he would amuse and instruct his pupil with descriptions or examples of chemical and magnetic processes; the formation of the *Arbor Saturni* being one of his most gratifying experiments. A glass jar was filled with a solution of acetate of lead ; in it was suspended a piece of zinc a few inches in length ; and, when it had been set aside a few hours, there appeared a well-formed tree, top downwards, having the zinc for its trunk, with the branches proceeding from it.

VII.

JOURNEYS.

AMONG Dr. Farmer's earlier acquaintances in Concord was Jacob B. Moore, Esq. He was a printer, book-publisher, bookseller, newspaper editor, and an author, and was a man of talent, mental cultivation, and great industry and endurance. He had the physical power for a more stirring and out-of-door life, while the doctor was doing his work in almost entire seclusion. The closest intimacy subsisted between these friends, until the more feeble of the two was taken away by death. They were associated in the preparation and publication of several volumes pertaining to the history of New Hampshire, but the most important enterprise in which they were mutually engaged was the publication of "The New-Hampshire Gazetteer." It was a work requiring a vast amount of laborious research, the writing of letters almost innumerable, and the exercise of much care and judgment. During the

preparation of it for the press, Mr. Moore was often in the doctor's place of business. When together, the doctor would read what he had written, and Mr. Moore would bring forward the matter he had been getting together; or, again, one or the other would read a letter just taken from the post-office. Their consultations were often quite animated; and their pleasure on meeting with some enlivening incident for the pages of the "Gazetteer," and especially as they approached the end of the book, was not to be suppressed. This work was published in 1823; in February of which year, at the invitation of Mr. Moore, who was going to Boston, strange as it may seem he made a brief visit to his friends in Billerica.

But the hard task of preparing the "Gazetteer" having been completed, he seemed to breathe more freely; and undoubtedly he felt the need of rest. So that, when the next spring arrived, he began to make preparation for an extended journey, — a huge undertaking for a man of his health and habits. He wiped his pen dry, shuffled his papers together and put them away, shut up his desk, seeming to say "good-by" to all that usually surrounded and employed him; and for several weeks there were vacancy and silence around the spot which was nearly always enlivened by his presence.

On a fine morning — it might have been in the

middle of June (1824) — he started out into the fragrant summer air, with Dr. Morrill's horse and chaise, and with his boy clerk for an attendant. The first day's ride brought us to the beautiful town of Amherst, — his former place of residence, — where he was welcomed to the hospitality of Nathan Kendall, Esq., with whose family his associations run, like threads of light, through all the acts and experiences of his youth and manhood. The next morning when we awoke, the sun was shining brightly into the room where we slept; and, knowing that this was my first trial of being away from home, his first words were, "Well, where are you now?" He next visited his sister, Mrs. Riddle, residing in Merrimack. Then we drove across the State line into Massachusetts, and as far as North Billerica, where he made a visit of several days with Mr. and Mrs. Rogers (Mrs. Rogers being a motherly aunt, who showed him a great deal of attention); and a shorter one with an uncle (Farmer), in the more southern part of the same town. From this place we rode to Salem, where he regaled himself a few days in the company of friends, — perhaps cousins, — and where he seemed greatly to enjoy a little excursion to the seashore. Then, turning his face toward home, he stopped with relatives in Andover, and again with his sister in Merrimack; from which place I was sent home to Concord with the horse and chaise, leaving him to finish his journey at his leisure.

He did not ride through the country in silence: he spoke of the friends he was going to visit or had visited, of the birds and the trees that attracted his attention, and of other things unnumbered; showing that his mind was fully and ever alive. He was absent from home five or six weeks, as nearly as can be stated now; and during the whole time he seemed like one sailing upon a smooth sea, and under a cloudless sky. Everywhere he was cordially received, and overwhelmed with kind attentions. His enjoyment must have been well-nigh unalloyed; although as he went from place to place, and bade adieu to his kindred and former associates, he must have reflected, that, in the case of most of them, it was probably for the last time.

This excursion was an extraordinary event in his life. Scarcely ever afterwards did he turn his back upon his desk and his manuscripts, even for a single day, excepting when unable to pursue the work in which he delighted. And it would appear evident, that he enjoyed better health at this time than he generally did in the later periods of his life: it certainly was not often that he could rely upon his strength sufficiently to trust himself away from home.

He went, in company with his friend Mr. Moore, about the time the "Gazetteer" was published, to pay

a visit to the venerable Mr. Welch, who lived three or four miles away, in the town of Bow, and who had attained the very great age of nearly one hundred and twelve years. And in those early years he made some brief visits at the house of Mr. Moore, and that of Dr. Morrill, and possibly other places ; but it was not until the year 1836 that he took another journey equal in length to that of 1824. He then visited Boston, doubtless anticipating great enjoyment in meeting many people of eminence whom he had known by reputation or correspondence, if not by personal acquaintance.

What is here said of this visit, is derived from his diary ; concerning which the remark may be made, that it is largely meteorological, is by no means full at any period, and has in it many interruptions. The original is among the collections of the Northern Academy of Science, Dartmouth College, Hanover, N.H. ; and a copy, transcribed by the late Rev. Silas Ketchum, among those of the New-Hampshire Antiquarian Society, at Contoocook, N.H. This diary, unless a portion of it has been lost, is perfectly silent as regards his setting-out for Boston ; nor does it say where he was at first entertained. It appears, however, that he was there on the 14th of September, 1836, and received some calls on the following days ; but the record is for the "29th, Joseph E. Worcester

called, with whom I had an interview," — a remark that would not have been made if he had not been laid aside by illness. And then the record is for the "30th, Rode out with Mr. Edmund Jackson; first time since illness." Then the record further is, "Oct. 1, Edmund Jackson called, and gave me an airing." "Oct. 2, Came to Edmund Jackson's, where I remained till the 22d."

It is probable that the fatiguing journey to Boston, together with the excitement of receiving the attentions of the cultivated people of the place, proved too severe a trial for his enfeebled nervous system; so that for some days after his first glance at the city he was reduced to the close confinement of sickness and suffering. But, apparently, he soon rallied; and during the last part of his visit he saw much of the sunny side of life. He speaks of riding to some place of interest almost every day, — to Roxbury several times, to Dorchester, to Punch-Bowl Village, to Commercial Wharf, and through State to Tremont Street, to Brookline, and round by Jamaica Pond and the seat of John Lowell, to South Boston, and round the Common.

And among those who called upon him were, Francis Jackson and wife, Dr. James Jackson, Judge Jackson, Edmund Jackson, Eliza F. Jackson, S. W. Jackson, Rev. Dr. Cogswell, Rev. Dr. Harris, Rev. J. B. Felt,

Joseph Willard, Esq., and many others. His record is for "Oct. 19, Called at Francis Jackson, Esq.'s, and passed the A.M."

"Oct. 22, Bade adieu to my hospitable friends Mr. and Mrs. Jackson, and returned to Nashua with my friend Mr. Spalding."

VIII.

CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

IT is evident that Dr. Farmer was a Christian. His diary and his letters show, that in his earlier days he was a constant and interested attendant upon public worship. He often made a record of the texts of the sermons he heard; and all his conversation and demeanor during life must be admitted as indubitable proof that he was a true disciple of Christ, although he may not have become a communicant with any particular church. And although this sketch cannot be classed with religious biography, yet it is no more than justice to record, that in many ways Dr. Farmer expressed his strong attachment to the religion of the Pilgrim Fathers. In one of his letters to Hon. Isaac Spalding, written when he was twenty-nine years old, he made the confession, "Such is my indwelling depravity, that, strange as it may appear, my days pass along with a constant accumulation of sin and guilt, which can

only be pardoned through the merits of an Almighty Saviour." Some time after his death, his former partner in business, Hon. Samuel Morrill, a deacon of the North Church in Concord, who must have known the depths of his heart, said to the writer, "He was a good man: he trusted in the merits of the atonement of Christ."

With his other excellences of character was connected an undisguised regard for the Bible. He revered and read it as the inspired word of God. This was made to appear in many ways. Among the gifts I received from him was that of a Bible (16mo), in the first part of which were a couple of leaves so neatly pasted in as to appear as if originally belonging to the book. On those leaves was written, in an elegant hand, and in letters almost as fine as diamond, the following encomium upon the Holy Scriptures:—

"'The Holy Scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation.'—PAUL.

"Numerous testimonies from the writings of distinguished, though uninspired men, might be exhibited in favor of the authenticity and excellence of the Scriptures. That prodigy of learning, Sir William Jones, wrote on the fly-leaf of his Bible the following remarks: 'I have carefully and regularly perused these Holy Scriptures, and am of opinion that the volume, independently of its divine origin, contains more sublimity, purer morality, more important history, and

finer strains of eloquence, than can be collected from all other books, in whatever language they may be written.' The advice of that 'giant in literature,' Dr. Samuel Johnson, to a young friend on a particular occasion, is equally in point. Summoning up all his peculiar energy of manner and expression, he said, 'Read the Bible: all other books have their foundation and their merits there.' The illustrious names of Milton, Newton, Locke, and a host of others, might be adduced. Even the deistical Byron (a lamented instance of perverted talents), in one of those seasons of conviction that irresistibly force themselves upon infidel minds, confessed the superior excellence of the sacred books. But the testimony of the inspired apostle, eminent for his learning and his intellectual gifts, from whose writings the above motto is selected, has still greater weight. His estimate of the Scriptures may be learned from his declaration that he counted 'all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge that is in Christ Jesus.' This knowledge the Bible imparts. Other kinds of knowledge, however useful, fall short of promoting the grand design of human existence, — the glory of God and the salvation of the soul; and as all knowledge is valuable, only in proportion to the end to which it conduces, what infinite superiority is attached to the knowledge contained in the Bible! The Bible is its own best evidence. The humble saint, who —

'Just knows, and knows no more,
His Bible true,'

is a living illustration of the intrinsic excellence of this blessed book.

"The religion of the Bible elevates not only the moral, but intellectual, character of man. By preserving him from the dominion of the passions, his mind becomes serene and unclouded, and its faculties acquire new vigor, and new powers of perception. 'Religion is the highest exercise of the noblest faculties of the mind upon the sublimest topics of mental investigation; the voluntary, excursive, endless pursuits of the human understanding in the region of eternal truth.'

"Wouldst thou, my friend, that this intellectual elevation were thine? Wouldst thou acquire the most exquisite relish for the sublime and beautiful in nature? Wouldst thou sustain a character for usefulness and respectability in life? Wouldst thou 'have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men'? Wouldst thou have comfort in affliction, society in solitude, true enjoyment in prosperity, and a shelter from the storms of adversity? Wouldst thou that thy good resolutions should be strengthened; thy love of virtue, and abhorrence of vice, confirmed and perpetuated; thy moral sense, the nice perception of right and wrong, quickened and preserved in its purity? And wouldst thou not only *know*, but *pursue*, the path of duty? — *Read this book.* Wouldst thou be an object of complacency to all holy beings, and to the HOLIEST *of all?* Wouldst thou 'grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ'? In fine, wouldst thou be happy through all the changing scenes of life, have hope in death, and an immortal inheritance of glory beyond the grave? Then, READ THE BIBLE; *read it frequently, believingly, and*

prayerfully; make it the man of thy counsel, and conform thy life to its precepts."

This excellent man was also a believer in the sabbath, as a day to be kept holy, both because it is an appointment of .God, and because of its beneficent tendencies and effects. Therefore he adopted the sentiment of Sir Matthew Hale, who is credited with saying, "No tradesman is more careful to take in his wares at night, than I am to take in my thoughts of this world's business when Saturday night arrives." His regard for the sacredness of the Lord's Day was in one case exhibited in a very practical way. It was on a winter sabbath day, and the snow had fallen to a considerable depth during the night previous; so that, not unwillingly, I found an excuse for omitting my usual visit to the sanctuary, and passed a portion of the day in the company of the doctor. The ingredients of some kind of a preparation were in process of dissolution in a bottle, and needed longer to be kept under the influence of heat. In my thoughtlessness I set the bottle upon the stove, wishing to hasten the operation that was going on, but was quickly directed to take it off, and reminded that the sabbath was no day for any such business.

Connected with his religious feelings was a profound and affectionate reverence for the ministers of the gospel. He loved their society, and sincerely

desired the prosperity of the grand objects to which their lives are devoted. And the interest he felt in religion led him to contribute, according to his ability, for the promotion of every good and charitable work.

If, however, he saw so much to be honored in the men of the sacred calling, yet he could recognize an eccentricity or a foible that might appear in their ranks, or relate with a zest a comical anecdote affecting some one of their number. Either to "point a moral or adorn a tale," he once gave a description of the manner in which a clergyman taught his servant (colored) to cross a stream upon string-pieces. Demanding the strictest attention, he instructed the negro to follow his example; and then stepping upon the slippery log, and placing his feet very carefully, he said, "Do *so*, and *so*, and *so*,"—and, as he uttered the third or fourth "*so*," he was floundering in the water. This anecdote was greatly enjoyed by the usually sedate doctor.

I once heard him speak somewhat in disapproval of some remarks made in a sermon at a protracted meeting, which had been reported to him; the preacher having spoken in terms which he thought inordinately fervid, of the separations between dear friends which must take place at the judgment-day. But I think it was only the extreme to which the idea was carried, that was aimed at by his criticism: I never heard him say a word against religion in itself.

A man generally shows very much of his character by his letters. Some extracts from those of Dr. Farmer will give an idea of the paternal feeling which he always cherished towards young men. After I had written to him, expressing the warmest gratitude for the kindness shown me in past years, he wrote as follows: —

CONCORD, 4 Aug., 1827.

MY YOUNG FRIEND, — I received your letter this morning, and was much gratified with your remembrance of me, and still more with the manner in which you allude to past times and opportunities of improvement while under my care. If you received any benefit from my instructions, I am glad, and shall consider the gratitude you express for them as the richest compensation I could receive. The good resolutions you have formed for improving present privileges are highly commendable, and I hope will be well fortified; and let me urge upon you, as of the greatest importance, the duty due to that Being who giveth us richly all things to enjoy, and who has the first claim to our services and gratitude.

I will add an extract from a letter, written in 1791 by your excellent great-uncle the late Gov. Brooks, to a youth of Medford, but then in Scotland, which contains very judicious advice: —

"At this period of life, the mind is peculiarly susceptible of impressions. At this period, too, habits are generally formed which are as durable as our existence. We sometimes, indeed, see a youth of active industry degenerate into an age of indolence; but we seldom see a youth of sloth exchanged for an age

of application. Let me then, from motives of friendship, call to your recollection those principles which I have often suggested to you, which are of infinite consequence, and cannot too frequently be the subjects of contemplation."

It is not doubted but that you may be subject to some services which require patience, and sacrifices of personal feeling, to perform; but you can look forward to when you shall be promoted, and some one else will succeed you in those services which you consider sometimes as disagreeable. You will recollect the advice of Cotton Mather to Dr. Franklin when he was a lad, who, on being shown a shorter way out of the house, through a narrow passage, did not notice a beam over his head — though directed by Mather to "stoop, stoop!" — until he hit his head against the beam. Now, Dr. Mather never missed any occasion of giving good instruction, and upon this incident said to Franklin, "You are young, and have the world before you: stoop as you go through it, and you will miss many hard thumps." Dr. Franklin has said that the advice thus beat into his heart was of great importance to him afterwards.

I am glad to find that you are reading Watts's "Improvement of the Mind" and Robertson's "Charles V.," and hope you will receive much good from the former, and pleasure from the latter. You will find Mason's "Self-Knowledge" a very good book. There is an edition to which I prepared questions last summer, and was published in this town. I notice with pleasure your good writing, correct spelling, and correct punctuation.

Your friend,

JOHN FARMER.

Probably at this time his table was encumbered with records of the early settlers of New England, or catalogues of colleges; and it must have been about the same period that he was gathering materials for his edition of Belknap's "History of New Hampshire," which was one of the most ponderous of his historical works. He was also giving more or less attention to the instruction of young men who were frequently calling upon him, conversing with them upon the contents of the books he had recommended, and correcting their compositions; not to mention his correspondence, and the numerous calls from prominent men of Concord and many other places, which made heavy demands upon his time and strength. But still he did not forget the one, now a printer's boy away from home, who had received so much of his affectionate attention in previous years. Here are extracts from another of his letters, — whose commendatory expressions, however, would seem to need a little softening down.

CONCORD, 2 July, 1828.

MY YOUNG FRIEND, — Your letter, accompanied with several newspapers, was handed to me by your sister; and I was surprised and delighted with the improvement which one short year has made in your penmanship, and in your style of writing. The train of thought and expansion of mind, with a full determination of future improvement, all

agree well, and are to me highly gratifying. The days that are past cannot be recalled; and, if we are sensible that any portion of them has been spent in youthful follies, it is the part of wisdom to avail ourselves of the experience we have acquired, and to endeavor that our future days shall be filled up with duty and usefulness. In this way, we may in some measure atone for past misimprovement of time. We may correct the foibles of youth. We may fix the principles which ought to govern us through manhood. I have already informed you that a virtuous course in youth will lead to stable and useful manhood. Even if we are compelled to associate with persons debased with habits of intemperance, profanity, and lewdness, we can, by the force and influence of good principles, avoid the contagion. Our own characters will remain unsullied if we come not into *their secret*, and keep aloof from their vices. I am obliged to you for the list of publications you sent. If you should find any others, in past years issued from your office, their titles would be acceptable. It will also gratify me at all times to hear of your progress in knowledge and virtue; to know what books you read, and the benefits you derive from them. Watts's "Improvement of the Mind," and Mason on "Self-Knowledge," are works of great value; but, to read them with profit and advantage, we should have our minds clear, and free from the entanglements of business or amusement. A few good histories, and the Constitutions of the United States and of this State, should make a part of your reading.

For your respectful notice I am grateful, and am your friend and instructor,

JOHN FARMER.

IX.

ANTI-SLAVERY. — FRIENDSHIP.

DR. FARMER possessed a native tenderness of heart which led him to sympathize with all the sufferers of misfortune. This was the source of his earnest devotion to the cause of the enslaved, while yet he clearly saw that every consideration of patriotism and benevolence also required that same devotion. That cause he ardently embraced when it first began to agitate the public mind, and to it he consecrated much of his best strength to the end of his life. Even when it became a subject of controversy, not always unmixed with bitterness, he firmly adhered to the sentiment that every human being has a right to his liberty, and that consequently it is a sin to take away liberty from one of God's intelligent creatures, unless it be forfeited by crime.

He well understood the objects and operations of the American Colonization Society: he admitted that its affairs were conducted by good men, and that,

viewed by itself alone, it was worthy of all commendation. But inasmuch as that society aimed at the removal of the *free* colored people only, while his desire was to have *all* set free, without expatriation, he felt compelled to turn his back upon it, and to use his influence exclusively for the emancipation of the entire colored race of the country.

He was not ignorant of the objections and difficulties supposed to stand in the way of the extinguishment of the system of slavery. He knew that the abolitionists were accused of using violent language and violent measures, and committing many grave mistakes. But his answer was, that in subjecting men to the degradation and cruelty of hopeless bondage, was the violence that most deserved condemnation; and that in tolerating such a wrong for an hour, there was the great mistake. Still he went on pleading that the enslaved millions might be set free.

For the accomplishment of this grand object, he wrote, acted, and prayed. He was corresponding secretary of the New-Hampshire Anti-Slavery Society for a considerable time, though probably never able to be present at its meetings. His annual reports were replete with facts and arguments which had a powerful influence throughout the State. The anticipation of the hour — which he did not live to see — when all the inhabitants of the land should

rejoice in the possession of liberty loomed up before his imagination like a vision of glory. His hopes were fixed upon it: it seemed almost constantly to employ his thoughts, and was most frequently the topic of his conversation.

He was never harsh or sarcastic in opposing the course pursued by others in relation to the subject, but invariably gave evidence of being governed by the dictates of an upright conscience and a sincere heart; and he always enjoyed the respect of those who differed from him in opinion. The man who questioned his motives, or opposed *him* with any severity, has never yet made his appearance. Nor did he suffer his views of slavery to diminish his regard for the Bible or its religion. He did what he could while his strength lasted; and, when he could do no more with voice or pen, he directed in his will — which was left unfinished — that a portion of his moderate property be given to the cause that lay so near his heart.

Some of his letters, found in the later portions of these reminiscences, convey a clear idea of his views and feelings on this subject.

No one could be much in the company of Dr. Farmer without learning that the New-Hampshire Historical Society was an institution in which he felt a deep interest. He assisted in its formation in 1823, became its corresponding secretary a year or

two later, and continued to perform the duties of that office with eminent ability until the close of his life. He naturally fell into such a position. Historical researches were to him both business and pleasure. The exclusion of the subject from his mind would have been the breaking up of the whole habit and course of his existence. Though constantly communing with the men of past days, he was laboring for the benefit of future generations. He saw it to be of the greatest importance, that the present generation should hand down to those yet unborn a knowledge of the character and achievements of their fathers; even feeling that he could not pardon himself if he did not do his utmost for the accomplishment of this object. Except during the frequent intervals when sickness compelled him to drop his pen, he sat at his table, day after day, month after month, year after year, examining ancient records, copying time-worn and half-legible documents, bringing order out of confusion, in graceful form placing before the eye of the children a picture of the life and times of their fathers.

Disease had a hold upon him from which he could not extricate himself, and the periods of his inability to be at his work were discouragingly frequent. Sometimes he was laid aside with an irritation of the lungs; at other times the stomach seemed to be the offend-

ing organ; or, again, it was general debility, accompanied with more or less of fever, that laid him low. But little of change in the atmosphere, of extra labor or excitement, or of food to which he was not accustomed, was required to place him upon his bed. And painful it was to those who loved him, and watched over him, to witness the paleness of the cheek, the sadness of the eye, and the weariness of patience and submission by which his sufferings were attended.

How he could perform so great an amount of labor with a constitution that appeared always ready for a final collapse, was a wonder to many. In writing letters alone, he did work sufficient for the strength of an ordinary man. His correspondents belonged in every part of the country, and included — if not others in Europe — the secretary of the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries at Copenhagen. And yet he was one of the humblest of men. He was perfectly destitute of the egotism of genius, and apparently without anxiety in regard to the estimation placed upon his labors by others.

Dr. Farmer was a man whose heart was incessantly emitting the fragrance of a pure affection. He knew how to be a friend, and no one ever more highly valued the friendship of others. He ever felt grateful that he was permitted to spend several years preceding his majority in a family in Amherst, where he was

treated as a son, and enjoyed privileges peculiarly his own; rendering it natural for one of the members recently to write, "The store, and John's chamber at the house, remain, nor has the apple-tree of his culture been removed." But alas for the stability of earthly mementos! I have since learned that the apple-tree no longer stands.

This was the family of Nathan Kendall, Esq., to one of whose daughters, it may not be going too far to say, he conceived a strong attachment, but from whom he became voluntarily disconnected on account of his feeble health; and he never married. One of the daughters of the same family became the wife of Hon. Isaac Spalding, one of the wealthiest and most influential citizens of Nashua, N.H., who died in 1876. And another married David Steele, Esq., a prominent attorney-at-law, of Hillsborough Bridge, N.H., also deceased. In Mr. Spalding and wife, Dr. Farmer found friends, intimate, trusted, and lifelong; and Mrs. Steele was to him an angel of consolation whose tender sympathy was ever at his command in hours of sickness and suffering, and whose privilege it was to minister to his necessities, and smooth his pillow when he fell into the arms of death.

In his familiar conversations he often spoke of his former associates. Among the members of the literary society at Amherst, was Levi Hartshorn, who

studied theology, and died early. He was a particular friend. Never did the writer of this narrative hear him speak in a tone of greater sadness than when uttering his recollections of this friend. Very soon after he had commenced the work of the ministry, he preached on a sabbath in the pulpit of Rev. Dr. Lord, then of Amherst. He was in ill health, and the effort caused the perspiration to stream from every pore; and he was immediately prostrated with a fever, which terminated in death, just when the bright prospect of a life of usefulness and happiness was opening before him. This sudden and violent disruption of so warm a friendship seemed to lie as a permanent pain upon his heart.

But, at the time of this friend's decease, he was away from home; and what were his feelings on receiving the intelligence, we learn from his own words, in a letter to Mr. Spalding from Salem, Oct. 1, 1819: —

My dear Friend, — The mournful and heart-rending intelligence contained in your letter of the 30th was divulged to me the same day, through the medium of "The Boston Gazette." For your kindness and attention in giving me such early and interesting particulars respecting my lamented friend, I am truly under the sincerest obligations. You did not miscalculate my feelings in supposing that I should not be uninterested in such an event. It is an event afflictive beyond any thing of the kind I ever experienced, for I

never before lost so dear a *friend* and *associate*. Suffer a few lines from me on so melancholy a subject.

A letter from Amherst to M. C., dated on Sunday, and received on Tuesday, gave me the first intimation of Mr. Hartshorn's sickness; but I hoped and prayed that he might recover. Yesterday forenoon, after I had been reading and writing some time, I walked out, as the morning clouds had dispersed, and the sun appeared with cheering beams, — little apprehending that the beauties afforded by a serene sky, and the satisfaction of my heart in beholding them, would be so soon enveloped with the clouds of such melancholy intelligence. I took my accustomed walk to the printing-office, which I had no sooner entered, and seated myself, when Mr. P. said, "You knew Mr. Hartshorn of Gloucester: he is dead!" I was petrified with astonishment. My emotions suppressed my utterance; and I distinctly felt, as it were, the chords of friendship which had so long united us forcibly severed from my heart.

> "As those we love decay, we die in part:
> String after string is severed from the heart."

The death of an eminent and highly useful servant of the cross is at all times a calamity of an afflictive kind; but when we view that person in the relation of a dear friend, the event is doubly distressing. My acquaintance with Mr. Hartshorn, as you probably know, commenced in the summer of 1809, while we were companions at school. It soon ripened into a friendship which was cemented by the closest ties of affection. In the midst of his usefulness, in the

meridian of his strength, in the flower and prime of his life, he is cut down, and numbered with the silent dead. The blossom has fallen to the earth, but it will bloom again with celestial fragrance in the paradise of God.

"The friend I mourn, with sacred love was fraught;
And truths divine, with Christian zeal he taught.
Still may he teach! still from the grave impart
Such truths as melt the eye, and mend the heart.
Oh, might I pour the solemn, plaintive strain,
And might its accents not be heard in vain!"

The delineation of his character would far transcend my feeble powers. Even if I were qualified, I should at the present moment be unable, from the effect this event has had on my system. I reflect with astonishment at finding myself the survivor of many early associates whose lives promised a longer date than my own. While I have stood feebly on the stage of existence, I have seen many of strength, beauty, and renown fall around me. I can only say, that the hand of kind Providence, the Father of mercies, has sustained me. Let us be thankful for the gift of life, and improve it while it lasts.

I am yours,

J. FARMER.

It was in connection with some of his allusions to this cherished associate (if there be no error of memory), that I first learned that Dr. Farmer possessed a fine musical taste. He had an ear of exquisite sensitiveness, but his voice partook of the

weakness of his physical powers generally; whereas his friend, in addition to a fine ear, had a voice both melodious and strong. He said that on one occasion Mr. Hartshorn and himself were out enjoying a ride, a little distance from their home in Amherst. Having reached an eminence which afforded an extensive view of the surrounding country, they halted to feast their eyes upon the magnificent scenery that lay spread out around and beneath them. As they were gazing, and expressing their admiration, Mr. Hartshorn felt the stirring of the muse within him; and he struck into the tune of "Scotland," with the words, "The voice of free grace cries escape to the mountain!" — sending the lofty strains echoing over wood, hill, and dale. At that moment there was kindled in the soul of the listener an enthusiasm of delight that must have been strange to himself, so irresistibly did he seem borne aloft upon the wings of the music that fell upon his ear.

In giving an account of this incident, he exhibited the deepest feeling. His countenance assumed an aspect that was rare, though characteristic of his higher moods. To give a description of it, is exceedingly difficult. There was a blending of solemn assurance with joyous satisfaction, the eye and the whole countenance beaming with glowing radiance. The lower portion of the face seemed to be actually

widened; the cheeks were filled out, and slightly reddened; the more prominent features took on new strength; every part of the body came into harmony with the uplifted soul; and the entire man became vocal in the expression of the positive joy of the heart. He was grandly indignant on rare occasions, especially when remarking upon the horrors of the system of slavery; but it was seldom that any event could arouse him to so high a degree of honest, noble, quietly demonstrative satisfaction as was manifest in the case now mentioned.

His love of music led him sometimes to ask a young man who might be in his room, to favor him with a little rehearsal of some piece from his singing-book. His boarding-place, on State Street in Concord, was in the neighborhood of the Baptist church; and for a time a prayer-meeting was held in the vestry of that church early on sabbath morning. He once spoke with feeling of the pleasure he experienced as his ear was greeted by the singing of that meeting. He mentioned particularly the tune of "Sterling," as having had a thrilling effect upon him. On still another occasion, as he heard a little girl singing while at work in another part of the house, — with the door ajar, — he remarked, "How sweet is that music! It is the singing of Nature: it sounds like the birds."

So the most trifling circumstance made its appeal to his sensitive nature and refined taste. He saw beauty, and derived pleasure from it, when many others would discover nothing worthy of attention. Once he held up a blooming damask rose that had been presented to him, and said in an animated tone, and with a countenance all aglow, "Who can paint like that?"

His engrossment in the dry details of history and genealogy did not extinguish his love of *poetry*. Pope's "Essay on Man" was familiar to him; and I have heard him quote the lines, on some occasion, —

> "Go! If your ancient but ignoble blood
> Has crept through scoundrels ever since the Flood."

But I presume he did not apply such words to any of the characters whose fame he was endeavoring to perpetuate. He would express himself as greatly delighted while reading, or hearing read, some of the more beautiful portions of Thomson's "Seasons;" the language of his sparkling eye agreeing with that of his tongue. But Cowper, probably, was his favorite. Indeed, he possessed much of the mild and kindly spirit of the beautiful writer whose poem "On the Receipt of my Mother's Picture" has reached the depths of so many hearts.

At one time he opened a volume of Cowper, and handed me, requesting me to read aloud, saying,

"Begin there;" pointing to the lines in the "Winter Evening" of "The Task," —

> "Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast.
> Let fall the curtains; wheel the sofa round."

This was on a winter evening at his State-street boarding-house, and there was a glowing fire upon the hearth before him. And, as the reading went on, he occasionally changed his position in just such a way as seemed expressive of enjoyment; once in a while interjecting the grateful applause: "How plainly one can see all that!" or words of similar import.

It is not too much to say that Cowper was to him as a cherished acquaintance, rather than a poet of the opposite hemisphere and of the previous age. Far more cheerful than was the poet, yet he ever alluded to him in a tone of affectionate sympathy, as if he had seen him, and loved him as a brother. He kept in his mind the names of the hares upon which the poet bestowed so much attention, and admitted them also to his friendship; although he himself did not keep even a dog, like Sir Isaac Newton, to tip over the lamp, and burn up his manuscripts; or, like Dr. Johnson, a cat, to creep over his shoulders.

X.

MODE OF LIFE.

BUT, however refined in his tastes, he was not one of the nervously timid sort of people. There was no trace of superstition in him. He had no eye for a ghost, and there was too much of consistency in his mental composition to allow him to be thrown into qualms by any trifling matter. He was thrown out of his equilibrium, it is true, one evening, — probably in the winter of 1822–23, — when a fighting and intoxicated old man was hustled into the shop for surgical aid, with his head and face covered with blood. There was considerable confusion, the bleeding man having a goodly number of assistants and followers; and some one crying out as if in great alarm, "This man wants his head done up!" The doctor's face was scarcely in its usually composed condition, showing that he had no taste for practising surgery in such a case; and he said, with no little appearance of disgust, "I can't do it: take him to Dr. C——!"

But just at the head of the stairs, — leading from the entry, — among the rubbish in the garret, not more than ten feet from his table, there was a box — minus a cover — full of ghastly human bones; and lying round somewhere was another box, containing the limbs of some fellow-mortal, with the desiccated flesh still adherent, — "preparations," the anatomists call them. But these things gave him no uneasiness; neither was he disturbed by the presence of a human heart, a liver, and a pair of lungs, well dried and varnished (all these precious articles doubtless being the property of Dr. Morrill), standing on one end of his counter, upon slender supports, like bonnets in a milliner's shop.

There are two classes of persons who are not fit for the cooler work of the anatomist's or the surgeon's profession. One class consists of the honestly timid, who make no effort to conceal their fear of the body when the soul has departed from it, and who are affected to swooning by the sight of a wound; and the other includes those who make such demonstrations of lightness and bravery in presence of relics of the dead, or in view of the scenes of a military hospital, as to give rise to the suspicion that they are using this means of sustaining their courage. But Dr. Farmer belonged to neither of these classes. His mind was sober, cool, and clear, and his conscience also; and

of the sensitiveness that is morbid and without a reason, he did not partake. He was one of those who say nothing, because they think nothing, of things such as have been alluded to, and such as no one would choose to be familiar with except for instruction or necessary use.

Immediately in the rear of the shop was an apartment which the doctor sometimes occupied as a sleeping-room, — notwithstanding the anatomical furnishings that were lying about, — especially during the month of June, when Gen. Low's house was filled with members of the Legislature. Another gentleman, who at a certain time passed a night with me in that room, was of a different temperament. When all was dark and still, and he was about dropping to sleep, there fell upon his ear from the lips of his bedfellow the inquiry, "Did you know there was a skeleton under the bed?" It was a thunder-peal, or might as well have been. "What?" said he, his alarm slightly tinged with anger. "Is it so?" He was assured of the fact: and, as soon as he had comprehended the situation, he leaped from the bed, demanding that his young bedfellow do the same; and in a trice the objectionable box was dragged forth, and man and boy, one at one end, and the other at the other end, bore it to the farther back part of the building. Dr. Farmer had a word of fault found with him for permitting

"that thing" to be left there. It must not be concluded, however, that the doctor himself ever occupied that bed with the box beneath it, or that he had any thing to do with the placing of things as they were.

In connection with that same bed, there was another and a more inoffensive, but not less amusing, occurrence. It was the place where the doctor often took an after-dinner nap in the long days of summer. One day he wished to get so nearly asleep as to "lose himself," he said, and nothing more. That he might effect his purpose, he took a small weight from the counter, and held it in his open hand, with the hand extended over the edge of the bed; thinking he should be waked at the right moment by its falling upon the floor. But the plan was a failure. He got a longer nap than he had bargained for, and came out laughing, with the weight still in his hand. It had not been on the floor.

A little episode in relation to another bed has often been acted over again, making strange music in the mind of the principal performer during the half-century that has passed away since it occurred. It must be brought in here, although it relates but little to the revered subject of this sketch. In those days when the doctor gave his young assistant and pupil the privilege of warming at least one-half of his couch

at night, it was for a considerable period — doubtless for good reasons — that he occupied what might have been Mrs. Low's chamber of honor, usually reserved for visitors of the politest sort. And, as the lad was not expected to wait for the doctor to retire, it was not an unusual thing for him to be in bed first. It was so on the occasion now referred to, not a little to his long-continued chagrin. The lad soon began to see vessels sailing in the sky, and many other impossible things, which indicate that a young person is nearly sound asleep. But suddenly the room was brightly illumined, and ladies' voices were heard, making him think he had been carried away into some shining fairy-land. In amazement he lifted his head to ascertain what might be the state of the case; and probably in still greater amazement the ladies, and Mrs. Low most of all, saw a boy's head shoot up from the soft pillow, like a "jack-in-the-box." But the case was soon understood. Mrs. Low had invited the doctor to take another room for the night, but his bedfellow had not been notified of the fact. The ladies withdrew, doubtless with appropriate embarrassment; and the boy hastened to make himself conspicuous by his absence, feeling ashamed to the point of every hair of his head. It was necessary to relate the adventure to the doctor; and to him it seemed so much more comic than tragic, that he dismissed it with a kind of compound smile.

Dr. Farmer was a man of practical wisdom. He had vastly more knowledge of human nature than many whose opportunities for seeing what it is were far superior to his own. His prudence and sagacity were daily in use. He could judge of character with singular accuracy. He could give advice. He could get hold of the hearts of others, and gain their confidence. He was one of the few men who *have* people's confidence, without seeming to make any effort to gain it; he being always and everywhere above suspicion.

He was ambitious only of doing his own proper business. He was economical of strength, time, and money. He made few false motions. He could say what he wished to say, without giving offence. He could ask the young man who had been sawing wood for him, as he was receiving his pay, "Now, what are you going to do with that money?" And, on receiving some kind of an answer, he would inquire, "Wouldn't it be wise to put a part of it into the savings bank?" — following up the suggestion with a little calculation about how much might be accumulated in that way in a given space of time, reckoning in the interest. He would thus show himself a benefactor to a person who perhaps had no other one to befriend him.

Just in the right manner he could give a hint upon *temperance*, in eating or drinking. He would easily

ascertain a young person's habits as to rising in the morning, and would advise an earlier hour; saying that an hour of precious time might be saved every day for reading, or some other profitable employment, but not omitting the suggestion that the change should be made gradually, lest rising a whole hour earlier than usual at first might cause unpleasant feelings for the whole day.

The hints he gave concerning the preservation of *health* were many, and always wise. Speaking with a young man about climate, in its relations to longevity, he mentioned a remark, with which he appeared highly pleased, made by Dr. Franklin when on one of his missions in Europe. The philosopher was asked, to how great an age the people of America lived. His reply was, that "he could not tell till Drinker died;" Drinker being, according to the best version of the story now at hand, a resident of Philadelphia who had at that time attained a very great age.

Dr. Farmer being such a man in all these respects, he could not but be a man of *order* and *exact habits*. He always knew where to find his boots, and could lay his hand on any utensil or piece of paper, without a long search, at any time. His clothes were invariably well brushed, and also his writing-desk and his floor. His medicines were never adulterated, even with dust. With him, to-day was very much like yes-

terday, and to-morrow like to-day. He never was in a hurry. He left his bed early in the morning; went immediately to the washbowl, that stood beside the water-pail upon a bench or low shelf (this particularly in his apothecary days); washed hands and face thoroughly with a fine sponge, — always with a sponge, — which gave a glow to his cheeks such as they had at no other time; then came a little throat-clearing, — too vigorous for a consumptive, and his voice was too easily managed for that; the use of the comb came next; in regard to the brush, I am in doubt; then a few bouts of walking the room, — and he was ready for business; generally nothing more than a little fixing of things till breakfast. He had a talent for employing odd moments in the use of the dust-brush or the wing among his shelves, books, and bottles.

His toilet was more elaborate when the beard needed attention, which was about three mornings a week. The shaving of his thin visage (he always shaved himself) was an undertaking of some magnitude, and not unfrequently he came from the glass with a spot of blood on his face.

He lived rationally. He was not afraid of a bit of beefsteak with potatoes. One day he took dinner alone, the family being absent; and the girl, when she cleared the table, in her innocence made the remark, "The doctor ate pretty well to-day." That he

ever indulged in wine, or any thing intoxicating, the present witness has no knowledge; and for snuff and tobacco he had quite as little use.

When breakfast was over, he went into the substantial business of the day. He sat down to that table in front of which so large a part of his life was spent. It was only three feet in length, and the same in breadth, — a common hard-wood table, of the invariable old style, and of dark-brown color. Upon it was his plain, portable desk, of generous dimensions, and about the same hue; sloping on the front side to within some two and a half inches of the face of the table, and having on the opposite side the usual apartments for inkstand, sand-box, and pens. Its open face was covered with green flannel, worn smooth by the attrition of innumerable books and sheets of paper; not to mention the hardship to which it was subjected by the continual pressure of the owner's right hand. And, were it not an indication that somebody's eyes were too familiar with the doctor's personal appearance, it might be recorded, that the lower surface of his coat-sleeve was sometimes worn to a shining smoothness.

This desk was closely packed round with books and papers, so as to render its being pushed aside impossible, without throwing any number of things upon the floor. It was never shut. A certain lad, before

whose eye it lay open for so long a time, saw the inside covers lifted very many times; but it was so sacred a thing that he never had the vicious curiosity to touch one of them himself. It is not quite true, however, that it was *never* shut. When the doctor went upon the notable excursion of 1824, that desk was not left open,—a circumstance of deep significance, seeming to say that the busy toiler in that laboratory of knowledge was gone; and a circumstance as rare as was the closing of the Temple of Janus at Rome, — signifying that peace prevailed among his manuscripts, books, pen, ink, and paper.

And the *chair* he sat in was not one that the polite people of modern times would care to have in their parlors. It was of oak, round back, bent frame, with the seat covered with a plain cushion. He was a very Diogenes as regards furniture. Indeed, it has all been described; unless his looking-glass has been forgotten, which might have been twelve inches by ten in size, with a few plain book-shelves and drawers, and a trunk or two. His thermometer, inkstand, folder, and ruler may be counted as nothing. The whole would scarcely have sold for twenty-five dollars. Not a picture ever adorned the walls of his room, so far as I can recollect.

There he sat at that table, and wrote and wrote. No outside attraction took off his attention. Gen.

Lafayette rode through the thronged and noisy streets in the summer of 1825, and Gen. Jackson afterwards did the same thing; but it is doubtful if his curiosity led him farther than the window in either case. Not that he did not breathe the spirit of patriotism; not that he had no warm admiration for the great Frenchman and the great men of our own country, — but his physical inability to enjoy the exhilarating pageantry in which so many find delight, together with his engrossment in the one purpose of his life, continually held in check the curiosity he might otherwise have indulged.

XI.

WRITING. — INDUSTRY.

DR. FARMER'S writing was plain, uniform, elegant, easily read; each letter and each stroke formed so perfectly as to appear like engraving. He wrote rapidly, not often finding it necessary to make an erasure or an interlineation; excepting when at work upon those statistical and catalogical publications in reference to which he was constantly receiving new information.

In his writing, emphatic words and phrases, such as would be printed in Italics, were usually underscored, and always with the aid of the ruler; that article being always kept within reach. His paper was generally without ruling; but his lines were as straight as ruling could have made them, and of uniform distances from each other. Frequently he would hold up the left-hand end of the ruler, the opposite end resting upon the paper, so as to be able to make his line without blotting the words newly written. Once in a while — not often — he would

wipe off, while the ink was yet fresh, a letter or a word which had dropped from the pen by mistake. The ring-finger alone had the privilege of doing this work, and the ink finally found its way to his hair.

He was sometimes seen bending over his paper, and writing, as if for variety's sake, with his chin or his cheek resting upon one end of his ruler, while the other end rested upon his thigh ; the prop being held in place by the left hand. When his writing was interrupted only for a moment, his pen was held in his mouth, or poised over his ear.

His *industry* was something marvellous. With pen in his mouth, he would rise many times in a day, and go to his book-shelves to consult some authority. The writing of *letters* may be said to have been one of the principal things to demand the use of his strength. It is more than probable that he wrote at least one letter a day, on an average, during the whole of his Concord life ; as he was able to inform almost any man that was known to any extent who his ancestors were, and was constantly receiving letters of inquiry upon matters of the kind.

His letters were models of neatness ; concise in their expressions, and to the point, without circumlocution ; affectionate, instructive, and encouraging, — those to young men especially so. He used letter-paper of the fashion of fifty years ago. In all his

letters the writing was methodically kept from the back of the sheet a proper distance, to allow of their being bound in a volume if desired; and a suitable space was left upon the third page for the wafer. In the date he usually put the number of the day before the name of the month, — with the name of the month abbreviated when possible, — and then the year; as, "1 Jan., 1881." And John was frequently written "Jno.," and other names were abbreviated in like manner.

The writing of a letter completed, it was folded and sealed as neatly and expeditiously as it was written. He turned the sheet round, so that its right-hand edge should be towards him; doubled over about one-third of the width of the first leaf; doubled this upon itself, bringing the farther edge of the folded part near the back of the sheet; then the lower end of the sheet was slipped round, and folded to the proper width; then it was whirled end for end, for the doubling of the upper portion in the same way; and, after one more turning, it was twice folded again, from back to front; giving the letter its proper form; each folded edge being nicely and solidly smoothed as he proceeded, with the back of the right thumb-nail, — that thumb-nail being so often brought into the same service that one inexperienced observer was sometimes apprehensive that it might be worn through;

the thicker end was then inserted into the thinner, on the back side; and the wafer (moistened from the mouth) slipped into its place, and pressed down with the ball of the thumb; the superscription added, — and the missive was ready for the post-office. Doubtless thousands of others folded a letter in about the same way, but these particulars are given as a matter of minor historical interest; it being the fact, that the envelope revolution took place so far back in the past as to leave the present generation without the means of knowing how their fathers prepared their letters for the mail.

And yet it is scarcely proper to say that letter-writing constituted a principal part of the business of his life. He always had some more solid work on his hands. The writing of letters, either of business or friendship, necessarily consumes time; but it does not draw upon the nervous power like the labor that must be done in the production of a volume. A letter may be completed in an hour or two, and then dismissed from the mind; but the preparation of a work like Belknap's "History of New Hampshire," or the "Genealogical Register of the First Settlers of New England," requires vigorous and continued exercise of the mental powers. It is an undertaking that must weigh heavily upon the brain for weeks and months, and probably much of the time in the night as well as during the day.

XII.

IN A NEW PLACE.

AT this point in the sketch now given of Dr. Farmer, it ought to be mentioned that he did not always remain in his modest quarters in the apothecary establishment. I returned to Concord after an absence of three years, not far from the beginning of 1829; and my former intimacy with my early friend was immediately recommenced. This date marks the commencement of a new period in the personal history of Dr. Farmer; although it is to be confessed, that some of the circumstances already narrated took place subsequently to the above date.

We have henceforth a new view of his whole manner of life. He was in a situation hitherto entirely unfamiliar to him, both as regards the employment of his time, and the sources of his income.

The copartnership of Morrill & Farmer had been dissolved; their business had been discontinued; si-

lence reigned in the chamber over the store where for years such quantities of drugs had been dispensed to the people, for weal or for woe, and where so much had been done by the doctor's pen for nothing but the highest good of mankind; and other men had assumed the responsibility of furnishing the community with things thought needful for their bodily ailments.

And about this period it was that Concord "Street" began rapidly to put on a more modern appearance. The blessed old wooden buildings in which the fathers had lived and traded and labored were disappearing, — being taken to pieces, or "retired" to more obscure localities. Brick blocks were raising their lofty forms, and looking down, as if in scorn, upon the humbler structures that remained standing around them, monuments of the work of the generation just passing off the stage. And sooner or later the tide of enterprise was to sweep away the old store, and the mansion beneath whose roof the doctor had so long enjoyed a quiet home, and around both of which clustered so many inspiring associations.

Possibly these proceedings and tendencies of the advancing age might have been distasteful to him whose mind was so constantly occupied with the things of the past, and whose reverence for the old would naturally overbalance his love for the new. Perhaps he wished to escape from the confusion that

was increasing around him, and to find superior advantages for reflection and study in a situation of greater retirement.

He had left Main Street. He was no longer an inmate of Gen. Low's hospitable home. Now his boarding-place was on State Street, west side, about midway between School and Pleasant, in the agreeable family of Stephen P. Breed. He occupied the front room of the north end, upon the lower floor of the house. His bed was in the south-west corner, his books were arranged upon the wall next the street, his table stood in the centre; upon the north side there was an open fireplace, and during the winter months he warmed himself by a visible, cheery blaze.

No longer surrounded by medicine drawers and bottles and jars, no longer breathing an atmosphere in which were mingled a thousand different odors, he was in a condition much more suitable to the character and habits of the refined literary man that he was.

He was now better situated for receiving visitors than before. The clergymen of Concord and vicinity, and prominent men from all parts of the State, were frequently in his company; and the conversation was always of a dignified and instructive character, ranging through the whole field of literature, science, and history. Representatives and senators, judges and

governors, often found it convenient to make him a call; and the young men, from whom he never turned away when they needed advice or assistance, were almost daily receiving his attentions.

It was about this time (1829 or 1830), that a number of young men united in forming the "Concord Lyceum." This made work for the doctor. He often corrected the compositions of the members, sometimes suggested subjects of discussion; and his influence did much to sustain its existence and usefulness. If any of us wished to know what king of England, or of almost any other country, reigned when any particular event or change took place, he could tell us. If we wanted help in arranging a difficult sentence, he could give it. If any principle in natural or moral philosophy required elucidation, he was ready to satisfy our minds in regard to it. So far was he from deeming it a hardship to receive calls and applications for assistance from his young friends, that he evidently would have felt it to be a privation not to be thus noticed. Of one young man, who had become less frequent in his calls than formerly, he once said, "I fear I am losing my hold upon him;" the expression being accompanied with some appearance of regret.

He was a *natural teacher.* At his new boarding-place, for a considerable time, he had his niece Miss

Riddle of Merrimack under his instruction; thus aiding her in pursuing her education. So well did he love the practice of teaching, and so earnestly did he desire to see improvement in his young acquaintances, that, when one of them called upon him, he would sometimes give variety to the interview by taking a book, and saying, "Let us *parse* a little;" or he would introduce some other school exercise, with the same end in view.

The ways were innumerable in which he could show a perfectly unselfish spirit. He had no disposition to monopolize the vocation of the historian. When I was residing for a time in a distant town, he made some effort to induce me to prepare a historical sketch of the place. He gave me a list of heads under which the various portions of the narrative should be arranged; such as, Topography, First Settlers, etc. But I had no leisure for the work, and it was never done.

I was not, however, remarkable for modesty in saying what I thought I could do. In conversation at a certain time, I expressed the belief that I could write a sermon. "Well," said the doctor, "I will give you a text;" and it was this: Mic. vi. 6–8, especially the first part of the sixth, together with the eighth verse, — "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? — He hath

showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" But from indolence, pressure of business, or most likely because I "had not a mind to," the sermon was never produced.

While at Mr. Breed's, the Rev. Moses G. Thomas, pastor of the Unitarian church, was his fellow-boarder for a longer or shorter period. Their conversations were frequent, and much enjoyed on both sides. And here an anecdote comes in place, which was related by the doctor with an unusual degree of animation. In the course of his ministerial duties, the Rev. Mr. Thomas exchanged pulpits on a certain sabbath with the Rev. Thomas Worcester of Salisbury. He came to remain from Saturday afternoon till Monday morning. At tea-time (I think it was) he took his place at the table, with the family, and possibly several boarders: the divine blessing was implored with all solemnity, and all was progressing with quietness and decorum. But, as soon as the reverend and venerable gentleman began to eat, a thought struck him seemingly with much force: he exclaimed, "*Oh, I forgot I had a piece of Mrs. Worcester's cheese in my trunk!*" and he abruptly left the table, ran up-stairs, and quickly re-appeared with the cheese in his hand. In telling this little incident,

the doctor came as near to a full-voiced laugh as in any case I can remember.

He once had a serious illness at the house of his friend Hon. Jacob B. Moore. In speaking of it a few years afterwards, he paid a high compliment to one of the New-Hampshire clergymen who happened to call upon him. He said he was quite disheartened, and apprehensive that his end was near. The old gentleman (it was the Rev. John H. Church, D.D., of Pelham) came into the room smiling, and appearing to be in the best of spirits. His experienced eye discovered at once that the sick man needed the medicine of cheerful looks and words, and he acted accordingly. When the doctor expressed his fear that the disease then upon him was going to prove fatal, he tried to persuade him to the contrary, and said, "I hope you will recover: you are going to do a great deal of good in the world yet. *We shall want you for secretary of the New-Hampshire Missionary Society;*" the idea being about enough to make the doctor himself smile. This sunny greeting and assuring conversation had a beneficial effect, and caused the doctor to cherish a high opinion of his clerical visitor. He never approved of any assumed solemnity, in tone or manner, on the part of a gospel minister.

XIII.

REMOVALS. — LETTERS.

BUT the doctor makes another removal. Perhaps in 1832 it was that he returned to Main Street, North End, and became a boarder with the Misses McClary. He was now quite as retired as before, but still he was fully as far from being alone: his friends knew where to find him, and they were never more cordially welcomed. And he was still the same indefatigable worker. His bed was again in the room where his labors were performed, and that circumstance may be held accountable for my recollection of an incident which shows that there was a vein of sportiveness about him which had not yet been exhausted. He was one day taking an after-dinner nap. He lay with his face towards the wall. I sat in the room with him, reading or writing. By and by the sleeper began to stir. He partly turned, and said, "Wouldn't you like *a swarm of bees?*" A little at a loss what to say, — for the thought came to my mind in an in-

stant, that a swarm of bees would be an elephant on my hands, — I ventured to answer, "I don't know but I would: where are your bees?" — "Here," was the reply in rather a sleepy tone. I began to say to myself, "Well, the doctor is out of his head for once in his life;" but he relieved me of my bewilderment, and set me to laughing at the same time, by reaching out his hand, and giving me a scrap which he had cut from a newspaper, with the title, "A Swarm of B's." Some of the B's were, "Be patient, Be gentle, Be kind," and so on to the end of a very instructive little chapter.

In the midst of all his engagements, Dr. Farmer had an eye upon the moral and religious condition of the place in which he lived. The cause of temperance, in all its phases, had a full share of his solicitude; and when he saw the people going to extremes in any of their social enjoyments, it caused him real uneasiness. While living at the North End, he spoke at one time with much feeling of *evening parties*, — their frequency, their expense, their tendency to foster dissipation of mind, the lateness of the hours to which those attending them were kept away from their homes, and the undesirable effects of them in the general view; and one of the ideas which he mentioned in particular was, that *they interfered with those religious duties which in every family ought to*

commence and close the labors of the day. And he expressed the wish that the attention of the community might be called to the subject in the religious paper. He proposed to furnish the plan, if I would fill it out. The proposal was accepted; and there appeared in "The New-Hampshire Observer" as many as a dozen articles under the caption, "Evening Parties," in which the said parties were treated in no commendatory manner.

But by and by the good man makes one more removal, prior to that last one that in a few years he was to make to "the undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveller returns." This time he turned his back upon the noise and dust, and found a home two miles from the middle of the town, upon the main road leading in a westerly direction, in the quiet and capacious residence of Mrs. Daniel Clark. Here he had the privilege of feeling that he was in the country. He could look out upon the fields, woods, and hills, stretching far away towards the south, east, and west. He breathed an atmosphere perfumed with the odors of many a green tree and many a sweet flower. His ears were saluted by the songs of the birds. In the bright summer day he could walk in the fields laden with the new-mown grass, and enjoy to the full the presence of nature unshorn of its beauties by the inventions of man.

How much he was able to avail himself of the out-of-door advantages which surrounded him, or how often his devotion to his books would allow him to do so, I cannot tell. His shoulders were becoming a little more rounded than formerly, and the lines of care and toil deeper in his face; and, if memory does not deceive me, gray hairs were showing themselves upon his head.

But the time had now come for us to separate. New engagements called me away from the place. We never met but once or twice more. The last time I ever pressed his loving hand was after we had been taking a ride as far as the street. He appeared then quite well. I thought I was going to see him many times more, but his end was not far off. Most of the following letters, however, were written previous to our last meeting.

Here is one written very soon after my removal from Concord: —

CONCORD, 18 Sept., 1834.

MY FRIEND J., — It occurred to me the other day that I owed you the *postage* of a letter, and I take this method to pay it. It slipped my mind when you were about leaving. But I cannot promise you any thing more than the paper itself, having been altogether incapacitated for writing by sickness, and now not in a fit condition to sit up at my desk; so I take my paper on my arm-chair, and may scribble until I am tired.

My illness commenced on the 5th, the day previous to which I received a visit from my Nashua friends Mr. and Mrs. Spalding and their son, and Miss Kendall of Amherst. They remained with me (that is, remained in town; for they put up at the Eagle), and were very kind in their attentions, during the 5th and until the morning of the 6th, when they returned home. Within a few days I was able to sit up, and walk into the other part of the house, and yesterday rode out, but am not able to perform any great feats of strength. But I have abundant reason to thank Him, in whom we have all that we enjoy in life, and place all our hopes for a happy existence hereafter, for the measure of strength imparted, and relief from the pains experienced. Our aid under such trials must always be derived from Him.

You are now probably well settled at your studies, and are enjoying the pleasures of retirement, and the benefits which books can confer, and the instructions of a devoted minister of the gospel. I heard from you verbally by Mr. Chadwick, who saw Mr. Stone at Meredith, and learnt that your health was good. I hope you will continue to enjoy as much; but, in order to do it, you must remember to take a due share of exercise. The *harvest* is not past, and in the labors of that you may delight to participate. It is generally a season of gladness, of joy, and should be of devout aspirations of gratitude to Him who giveth us all things liberally to enjoy. I remember the enjoyments of gathering the products of autumn by the harvest moon; and it was no unusual thing to collect on the green in large parties, to

prepare these products for winter storage, and this done in the bright evenings of autumn.

The meetings at Meredith are spoken of as being highly interesting. I hope the remarks of Dr. Matheson on the subject of slavery will not be lost on the numerous clergymen who were present. It is a subject which must more engage the attention of the messengers of glad tidings than it ever has yet done. Ministers must not be afraid to speak and to preach on the subject. Slavery is one of the greatest national sins, and it cannot much longer remain unpunished. Even Jefferson, a slaveholder, said he trembled for his country when he reflected that God was just. I have sometimes queried in my mind, if our Saviour were again to appear on earth, and should make our country the scene of his mission, what portion of our extended territory he would first visit, and what the first people to whom he would proclaim peace and good will towards men. Would he not first visit the captive? Would he not command that every yoke should be broken, that the poor and ignorant slave should be set free and enlightened? Would he not reprove some of his heralds for their apathy — nay, for their wickedness — in saying, "Touch not the subject of slavery: they have slaves at the *South;* let the South take care of their slaves"? Now, this has been actually said by professed Christians, and ministers of the gospel. Let this course be adopted, and how long would it be before the sin of slavery should cease? This may be a good subject for one of the "Letters from the Mountains," which I hope will be forthcoming soon. You see, my

paper is exhausted; so I must conclude with assurances of my friendship, and my sincere hopes of your improvement in every thing good.

Your friend,

JOHN FARMER.

It cannot be denied, that, in the above epistle, there is a large amount of energy displayed by the writer, for an invalid. In relation to the great evil of slavery, it exhibits the righteous indignation of a man who never uttered a sentiment which he did not feel. That was a subject in regard to which he could not suppress his convictions. In the letters which follow, he expresses the same feelings. They give some true idea of the severity of the conflict that preceded the final overthrow of the slave system in our country. And yet we may well bear in mind, that at that time, and during the years that followed, many things were said and done, in opposition to the anti-slavery enterprise, which are now regretted by all. Here is his next: —

CONCORD, N.H., 6 Nov., 1834.

MY DEAR J., — Yours of the 29th ult. was handed me last evening. It affords me great pleasure to learn that your health is so good, and that you realize such a share of enjoyment, both temporal and spiritual. May these blessings long continue, and may warm aspirations of gratitude ascend to Him who in judgment remembers mercy!

I directed to you an "Observer" on which I wrote something, and the packet has long lain in my window for an opportunity to send; but I now substitute another paper, containing No. 13 of "Evening Parties."

You speak of having an Anti-Slavery Society in Campton, and I hope you will send delegates to our convention next week. We are expecting several gentlemen of distinction from abroad. I received, last Saturday, a letter from the distinguished philanthropist George Thompson, from London, who will, with permission of Divine Providence, be with us, although he was engaged at Providence on the 14th. He is greatly delighted with the abolition feeling which is abroad over the land. He says, —

"You have *begun* WELL. All will work well while *principle* is the guide. Never let us be induced, from any consideration, to adopt that doctrine of devils, — EXPEDIENCY. While we tread the straight line of *principle*, the shield of the Almighty is over us, and our triumph will be glorious."

While in Maine he attended the convention at Augusta, lectured once at Hallowell, twice at Brunswick, three times at Portland, and delivered about half a dozen addresses. His interview with the students at Waterville, where he also lectured, was peculiarly gratifying, and especially on account that they *all* were abolitionists. At Brunswick a good portion were in favor of anti-slavery principles, and the leaven was diffusing itself rapidly.

The advice of Dr. Matheson at Meredith is beginning to operate; and I was surprised and gratified in seeing this day,

in yesterday's "Boston Patriot," a letter addressed by a number of worthy citizens of that city to Mr. Lawrence, who is a candidate for member of Congress, and calling upon him for an expression of his views in relation to the evils of slavery. His reply is also published, and is all that abolitionists could wish. A person's principles in regard to slavery will by and by become the great test as to the choice of members of Congress in the non-slaveholding States, and especially with Christians, who have too long manifested great apathy in the choice of our rulers. Why is it that we have so many infidels and immoral characters for our rulers? Is it not because Christians have aided by their votes in their elevation? If a candidate was only of the right kind of politics, no matter whether he were an infidel or deist. You have seen something of this kind of feeling in Concord.

I am happy to learn from some gentlemen I lately saw, that your Rev. Brother Stone is favorably disposed to the anti-slavery cause. To this result we must all come, although the process is longer with some than others. To those who fully believe that the laws of God are paramount to the laws of man, the process is a short and easy one. "We ought to obey God rather than man." (Acts v. 29.)

In regard to religious prospects, an effort is now making to excite the attention of the church in this place. It is said that there has seldom been so much want of religious feeling here since Mr. B——'s settlement, as at this time. Meetings are taking place throughout the town, and to-morrow there

is to be a meeting through the day at the M. H.; and next week there is to be a protracted meeting in the West Parish. You will present my respects to Mr. Stone, and in return to the kind remembrance of Mrs. Le B——, to her also, with a wish that your happiness may continue.

With sincere regards I remain your friend,

JOHN FARMER.

P. S. Write as often as you can.

XIV.

LETTERS. — ANTI-SLAVERY.

AGAIN he writes under the date of

CONCORD, 24 Jan., 1835.

MY DEAR J., — I often wish that the communication between this place and C—— was more frequent, as in that case, if I did not write, I would endeavor to send you something equivalent to a letter; and I should hope also to receive more frequent communications from you. Your last letter gave me much pleasure, as did also the call of Rev. Mr. Stone, from whom I had such pleasing intelligence concerning you, — of your progress in your studies, of your personal quiet and happiness. Your "No. III." of "Letters from the Mountains" was also valuable, and I will inform you how I have disposed of that and the preceding numbers. "No. I." was handed to "The Observer," and met with an immediate insertion. "No. II." touched upon the subject of slavery; and having been in the hands of the editors about six weeks, and not published, I withdrew it, and presented it to "The Abolitionist," where it was inserted in tne first number of that paper. In order to save harmless "The Observer," by adding any explanatory note,

I called "No. II." "No. I." when published in "The Abolitionist," and "No. III." will be "No. II." I hope you will continue the series, and send a number for every number of the paper; and now you need not fear to touch upon the subject of slavery, as we have a paper in which discussion is admitted. This prohibition of discussion was to me a cause of deep regret. It was so to many others, and I presume it was to you. It is not in agreement with the principles of Protestantism. Our Puritan fathers would be unwilling to acknowledge some of their time-serving posterity. "Discussion," say the students of Lane Seminary, — the "Exposé" of whom I hope you will read, — "is the standard test for the detection of fallacies and the revelation of truth. It is the furnace where gold and alloy separate. It is the fan which drives the chaff and wheat asunder. It is the court of errors, where the decisions of individual tribunals are reversed or confirmed. In the search after truth, can we dispense with such aid, when available, and be guiltless?"

The new paper in behalf of abolition, which has lately commenced here, will need writers, and will need patronage, in order to be sustained. Will not our friends at C—— do something? Cannot you obtain ten or twelve subscribers? Try and see. An account of your Anti-Slavery Society is wanted, with the names of the officers. I have on hand a few copies of the proceedings of our convention, and address to the people of New Hampshire on the subject of slavery in the District of Columbia, which I wish to send

you. Direct some of your C—— friends coming to this place, to call on me for them.

You speak of those papers I put into your hands before you left Concord. Give yourself no uneasiness about them. Unless I send you others connected with them, they will appear as unintelligible to you as some of your first lessons in Euclid or the Greek grammar.

I am informed that there is some attention to religion in our village. This is the fourteenth day of a meeting holden every evening at the town hall, where various neighboring ministers have officiated. Gov. Morrill seems to be much engaged. There is also a protracted evening meeting at the schoolhouse near Mrs. Clark's, on the Hopkinton road. Let me hear from you oftener than of late, and be assured I have the warmest wishes for your happiness and usefulness, and remain your friend,

JOHN FARMER.

My respects to Mr. S—— and your wife.

Again he writes: —

CONCORD, 10 June, 1835.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — Your old instructor has not forgotten you, but thinks of you almost daily, if not every day; and it was with no small degree of pleasure that he found, from your letter of the 28th ult., that he himself was not forgotten by his affectionate and well-beloved pupil. My silence has been principally owing to various duties which have crowded upon me. As corresponding secretary of three distinct societies, I have much gratuitous labor to perform, and

some of my friends do not receive so many letters from me as they would if these societies were like some which have corresponding secretaries; but they all have work for this officer to do, and it must be done within a certain time. Notwithstanding my silence, I remember my friends. I delight to call them to mind, and to enjoy the reveries their recollection affords.

You would have been much gratified in attending the annual meeting of the New-Hampshire Anti-Slavery Society, to witness the warmth of feeling and the breathings of benevolence for those in chains, and groping in moral and intellectual darkness. The whole proceedings you will see in the next number of "The Herald of Freedom," from the pen of Mr. Kimball, who is now a boarder in our family. A great effort has been made here, to prop up the colonization cause; and the friends of it were excited to action by the presence of Mr. Gurley, the general secretary at Washington. He took part in the discussion on Friday evening, lectured on Saturday evening, preached on sabbath afternoon and evening, and lectured again on Monday evening, when he received, as auxiliaries, Samuel Cushman, Joseph Robinson, and Gov. Morrill, who all spoke; and with all these efforts, I understand, about three hundred dollars were pledged. Now, mark the difference. The Anti-Slavery Society at their meeting on Friday evening, in the course of fifteen or twenty minutes, raised the sum of five hundred twenty-six dollars; or that amount was pledged for the general objects of the society. It will doubtless be applied to the objects of an agency, on which Mr. Storrs will be appointed.

Col. Baker, who delivered me your letter, appears to be an intelligent man and a stanch abolitionist. I am in hopes he will call again; as I wish to make inquiry respecting the prospects in your quarter, and whether you need an agent to visit you. Mr. Storrs was our delegate at New York on the 12th, and at Boston on the 25th. He is now attending the New-England Conference at Lynn, in which, last week, an anti-slavery society was formed, and forty ministers had signed the constitution on Friday last.

The improvements going on in Concord, the present season, would somewhat astonish you. I hope you will come and see us this summer. If you cannot, you must favor me with your letters somewhat oftener. If you should have any thing like an original hymn or ode, suitable for the annual meeting of the Concord Anti-Slavery Society, to be on the 4th prox., it will be acceptable.

With regards to your family and Mr. S.,

I remain your friend,

JOHN FARMER.

26 June. I have delayed sending this letter till this time. I would remark that the day of fasting and prayer in behalf of the slaves throughout the United States was observed in this place yesterday. Mr. Storrs gave an excellent discourse from Matt. xvii. 20. We are thinking of an anti-slavery hymn-book, to contain pieces suitable to be sung at the monthly concert, last Monday of each month; and I will thank you to write one or more, and also to prepare an

anthem, — that is, fix some suitable words of Scripture to some approved piece of music.

Yours as before,

J. F.

These letters were written in one of the most stirring periods of our country's history. The great battle was well begun which ended in the emancipation of four millions of enslaved men, women, and children. Only those who lived during the long struggle can form any proper judgment of the amount of wrangling and bitterness by which it was characterized. It seems almost strange that a man like Dr. Farmer, mild, candid, dispassionate, as he was, should have been so enthusiastically engaged in it; but all is explained by the simple fact that it was a contest for justice and mercy that was going on. It was his conscience that was doing its work.

The men whose names he mentions as being on what he esteemed the wrong side of the great question, were good men. He admitted them to be such. He had no gnashing of teeth for them. He only meant to adhere firmly to the right. We may be thankful that the time has arrived when a better understanding prevails in regard to these matters of national and world-wide importance.

It may not be out of place to remark, that George Thompson, Esq., of London, Eng., and Rev. R. R.

Gurley of Washington, D.C., of whom Dr. Farmer speaks, were not only men of the highest character otherwise, but also among the most distinguished orators of the two hemispheres. Each of them pleaded his cause in a manner that was truly magnificent. Whether Dr. Farmer ever listened to the eloquence of either, I do not know; but he probably admired them both, while he agreed with the one, and differed from the other.

A few months after the reception of the last of the above letters, I removed to another place, and to a situation of increased responsibility and labor; and then, after a little more than another year, I found myself in Massachusetts, with still heavier burdens upon me; and I fear I began to be inexcusably neglectful of my correspondence with the friend who never knew when to cease showing kindness to me. To that place came the last letter I ever received from him, which is as follows: —

CONCORD, 3 July, 1837.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — Yours of the 23d was delivered to me the day of its date. It was welcome, but much more welcome would have been the hand that wrote it; yet I can excuse you for not calling, as your calls were imperious. It is more than a year since I saw you; and, until your late letter, it was a long time since I had heard from you. I rejoice in all your prosperity, and feel happy in learning that the sphere

of your usefulness is enlarged; that you are in your native State, and near the residence of your early ancestors. Our dear old Massachusetts, after all, is entitled to our highest regard; and notwithstanding some faults, and something that we could wish were otherwise, we can with ardor exclaim, "We love her still!" You will, I imagine, find more congenial society where you now are than you could expect at D——; and you will be in the neighborhood of ministers of the gospel, with whom to associate must be one of the highest delights of this sublunary state. You will, I doubt not, use that prudence and circumspection in your intercourse with them, which your experience and a due regard to your usefulness and reputation will naturally suggest; and among your people you will find a great call for prudence. There have been some eminent men settled in the ministry in Stoneham; and I recollect of once seeing a sermon of Rev. John Searl, who was regarded as fond of metaphysical investigation. He was settled *first* as the second minister of Sharon, Conn., in August, 1749, but was dismissed on account of feeble health in 1754. He, however, recovered his health, and was installed at Stoneham, where he lived to an advanced age. Dr. Dwight informs us in his travels, that Mr. Searl and Judge Noble were the first persons who ever went to the top of *Saddle Mountain*, which is considered the highest mountain in Massachusetts. Thus much for one of your predecessors. It may be well for you to collect some account of all the ministers who have been settled there, and communicate it to "The New-England Specta-

tor," or "Boston Recorder." I am, perhaps, quite as desirous that important facts should be preserved for succeeding generations since I have been so deeply immersed in the old papers in the secretary's office [of state] as I was before. I have, to my sorrow, seen the loss of many valuable documents which would be highly useful in illustrating the early events in our country's history.

But I cannot enlarge, as I must say a word on anti-slavery. It was the remark of a good old Puritan minister, that he wished to sweeten his mouth daily with a little of Calvin; so, in like manner, do I find it comfortable for me to dip a little into anti-slavery. The cause is onward, notwithstanding all the obstacles thrown in the way to oppose it. Those very obstacles add to its momentum. In this State, there is much latent abolition, which will soon be called into action. "The Herald" has been doing good, and it has brought many into the light: but I lament to inform you its talented and accomplished editor [Mr. Rogers] is now languishing on the bed of sickness; and it is not at all probable that he will be at present, if ever, able to resume his useful labors. He is one of a thousand, if not ten thousand. I know not any one who can fill his place. The Ladies' Society here are sending out petitions to every town in the State. They are before us *men* in the good cause; and I know not [but] that the world would go on better if Miss Martineau's principles of the rights of women (see the chapter on the "Political Non-Existence of Women," in her new work "Society in America") should be received, and carried out.

To-morrow our national independence is to be celebrated by the young men on one part, and by the Sunday school and friends of temperance on the other part. For me, I think with Garrison, —

> "We'll not discourse of British wrong,
> Of valorous feats in arms by freemen bold,
> Nor spit on kings, nor tauntingly call names;
> But we will fall upon our bended knees,
> And weep in bitterness of heart, and pray
> Our God to save us from his gathering wrath:
> We will no longer multiply our boasts
> Of liberty, till we are truly free."

Remember your old friend, and remember him to your wife and family. That the blessing of God may be with you, is my fervent prayer.

Yours,

J. FARMER.

I have not failed to reflect that it is something like unfairness to the departed, to publish their letters, which were written in the haste of private correspondence, and in which they freely express their opinions, without the remotest thought of their being exposed to any other eye than that of the recipient; but another reflection is, that Dr. Farmer would have been the last man to wish to conceal his views of any subject whatever.

Mr. Rogers (N. P.), mentioned in the above letter, was at the time extremely unpopular with many ex-

cellent people. He was a man of high cultivation, and genial and attractive manners, a gifted attorney-at-law, a gentleman in any society, — precisely the man we should not expect to see contending for the rights of the down-trodden slave. He married a sister of the wife of George Kent, Esq., and was often a visitor at the house of the latter gentleman in Concord; Mr. Kent being a man of the same stamp, and equally well disposed towards the anti-slavery enterprise. When he visited Concord, in the first years of his connection with the church, he attended the prayer-meeting with his brother-in-law, if that meeting occurred during his stay in the place; and my pleasant recollection of him there is as a humble Christian gentleman, particularly arresting my youthful attention by spreading his handkerchief upon the dirty floor of the old town-house, to kneel upon when he led in prayer.

He came down from Plymouth, and took up his residence in Concord, during the heat of the anti-slavery controversy, and became editor of "The Herald of Freedom." I am pained to say, — and I say it with becoming tenderness, remembering that he cannot now make any defence of himself, — that he thought he saw in the Church that (in relation to slavery) which warranted him in withdrawing from it; and that he was led to express himself many times in an extremely harsh and uncharitable manner. Nor

would I by any means justify all that was done, or left undone, in the Church in those exciting and trying times.

But Dr. Farmer thought, that, though it were wrong to speak or act against the *Church*, it was equally so to speak or act *for* slavery: therefore he did not turn against the Church, nor against his friend Rogers. However much he might value the friendship of others, he held in the highest esteem Mr. Rogers, Mr. Garrison, Wendell Phillips, and the anti-slavery leaders and laborers generally.

XV.

LABORS. — LAST DAYS.

I HAVE before spoken of the immense amount of labor performed by Dr. Farmer, and I feel unwilling to draw these reminiscences to a close without presenting some general view of his published and unpublished works. The following summary was given by Rev. Dr. Bouton in his discourse preached at the funeral of Dr. Farmer, and was also contained in the sketch of him, written soon after his death, by Hon. Jacob B. Moore. In the fewest words it is as here given: —

Historical Sketch of Billerica, Mass.; Historical Sketch of Amherst, N.H.; A Family Register of the Descendants of Edward Farmer of Billerica, Mass., in the Youngest Branch of his Family; A Topographical and Historical Description of the County of Hillsborough, N. H.; An Ecclesiastical Register of New Hampshire, containing a Succinct Account of the Different Religious Denominations, their Origin, Progress, and Numbers in 1821, with a Cata-

logue of the Ministers of the Several Churches from 1638 to 1821; The New Military Guide, a Compilation of Rules and Regulations for the Use of the Militia; A Gazetteer of New Hampshire, in conjunction with Hon. Jacob B. Moore; Memoir of the Penacook Indians; Catechism of the History of New Hampshire for Schools and Families; The Concord Directory, 1830; Pastors, Deacons, and Members of the First Congregational Church, in Concord, N.H., from November, 1730, to November, 1830; an edition of Mason on Self-Knowledge, with questions; an edition of the Constitution of New Hampshire, with questions, for academies and schools; a new edition of Belknap's History of New Hampshire, containing various corrections and illustrations of the first and second volumes of Belknap, with additional facts and notices of persons and events; seventeen volumes of the New-Hampshire Annual Register and United-States Calendar; three volumes of Collections, Historical and Miscellaneous, in connection with J. B. Moore; papers in the second and third series of the Massachusetts Historical Collections; papers in five volumes of Collections of the New-Hampshire Historical Society; and papers in The American Quarterly Register as follows: sketches of the first graduates of Dartmouth College from 1771 to 1783; list of the Congregational and Presbyterian

ministers of New Hampshire from its first settlement to 1814; list of the graduates of all the colleges of New England, containing about nineteen thousand names; list of eight hundred and forty deceased ministers who graduated at Harvard College from 1642 to 1826, together with their ages, dates of graduation, and decease; memoirs of ministers who graduated at Harvard College to 1657. To all which may be added his "Genealogical Register of the First Settlers of New England," a work of immense labor, and intended to be carried out on a scale of the grandest dimensions. The title-page of one of the great historical works of Massachusetts, afterwards published, is in itself a compliment to the excellence of the work of Dr. Farmer, as also to the merit of its author. It is, "A Genealogical Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England, *on the basis of Farmer's Register*, by James Savage."

In manuscript he left a large mass of material for a second volume of the History of New Hampshire; sketches more or less complete of deceased lawyers, physicians, councillors, and senators of New Hampshire; extended tables of mortality and longevity; list of the graduates of the colleges in New York and New Jersey, not complete; ten bound volumes, duodecimo, of memoirs of more than two thousand graduates of Harvard College; and two bound volumes,

same size, of memoirs of graduates of Dartmouth College; besides corrections and additions to almost all his published works, which might have been incorporated in new editions.

During the last part of his life he was occupied with the work committed to him by the Legislature of New Hampshire, of arranging, indexing, and preparing for binding, the public papers of the State. Probably no day-laborer was reduced to severer toil than he imposed upon himself while engaged in this work. He found the ancient records in great confusion. He arranged them in chronological order, put them into a condition for binding, copying many hundreds of pages; so that in the archives of the State there are now more than a score of ponderous and elegantly bound volumes of these papers, which will be of great service to future generations, and for which they will be indebted to his industry and skill.

In his message to the Legislature, June, 1837, Gov. Isaac Hill, who had been an intimate acquaintance and friend of Dr. Farmer for many years, makes the following remarks: —

"Perhaps a century may occur before another person with the peculiar tact and talent of Mr. Farmer shall present to undertake this work. Although of extremely feeble health, there is not probably any other person in the State who can readily perform so much; none so well versed in

its history, and who has, like him, traced from the root upwards the rise and progress of government in the land of the Pilgrims, and the origin and spread of every considerable family name in New England."

But any description of Dr. Farmer's labors must necessarily be quite imperfect. The work he did as a member of the publishing committee of the New-Hampshire Historical Society; his annual reports of the various societies of which he was secretary, and keeping the records of those societies; his contributions to weekly and monthly publications; and his voluminous correspondence, — these items, in addition to the more extended and laborious undertakings of his life, show that he performed an amount of work that is truly astonishing.

And all this must not imply that he was not a *reader*. The fact is, it implies the contrary. The old tan-colored volumes and pamphlets that he pored over for hours and days, and which in a measure furnished the pabulum that fed his prolific pen, deserve the name of legion; not to say any thing of the current literature, to which he gave a due share of attention. He sent in every direction for books of a historical or biographical character. Even an antiquated almanac he regarded as a choice acquisition; and how much pleasure it gave him to find a name or a date that was wanting to fill a vacant space in one of his cata-

logues or records, it would be difficult to tell. And in the same line of thought it is, to say that he appeared to have a real affection for the Latin names found in the college catalogues. It is pleasant to know that he found *so* much of enjoyment in the midst of his toilsome career. It is also a gratifying fact that his eminent character and services were recognized by his election to membership in the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries at Copenhagen, and of the American Antiquarian Society; as well as corresponding member of the Historical Societies of Massachusetts, Maine, Rhode Island, and New York.

But it is impossible to find any thing agreeable in the fact, that, for all his hard work, he received but meagre compensation. He once alluded to this fact, evidently with some feeling of sadness. He said that for a considerable time his income had been scarcely equal to his expenses. It is not unreasonable to suppose, that, if he had been as laborious a writer of fiction as he was of solid and useful history, he might have approached the estate of a millionnaire. If he ever offered the prayer of Agur, it was answered: he knew not the inflictions of either poverty or riches.

As I look back upon his life, I see a mild and pleasant light running through it all, — the light of a modest, uncomplaining laborer for God and man. It gives me pain to reflect that I was not sooner awakened to

a consciousness of having some knowledge of him that was worthy of being communicated to others. Many times since the dark curtain fell between him and me, have I wished I might enjoy the privilege of consulting him upon questions that were difficult for me to solve. I would go almost any distance, that I might be in his sunny presence, and enjoy an hour of conversation with him once more. I shall never forget his fatherly affection, his sweetness of temper, his invariable superiority to self. But yesterday it seems, since he bent over me to see if I were taking due pains with my penmanship; since he reminded me of my mistakes in grammar; or, indeed, gave me just the kindest possible admonition concerning errors that were neither grammatical nor right in any sense whatever.

I was not always careful of his valuable utensils. Who was it but me that gave the edge of his porcelain mortar a stroke with the pestle intended to jar off the medicine that adhered to its sides, and saw the mortar ruined? who else that tried the experiment of going out of doors to scour his spatula, and left half of the blade in the ground? and who that tasted his tamarinds oftener than was in any wise necessary? But, oh, I can to-day see that still placid countenance, marked with a slight shade of sorrow, which sent straight to my heart the severest rebuke I could have received!

One of his friends made him a present of an elegant inkstand, and a finely polished marble or soapstone ruler. As another friend was viewing and admiring the ruler, it dropped from his hand, and was in fragments; and yet there was the same unruffled spirit, and the same kindly expression. There was the great marvel.

Well enough he could see the sins and follies of others, but he uttered no harsh judgments. The strongest expression of dislike that ever fell from his lips in my hearing — nor am I able to recollect of what or whose performance it was uttered — was, "Vox et præterea nihil."

Years after my acquaintance with him began, it seemed to do him good to put into my hand a cluster of nice raisins that he had laid up in some safe place. When I was about visiting Boston, uninitiated in the intricacies and dangers of the great city, he was careful to give me a letter of introduction to a gentleman of his acquaintance (Francis Jackson, Esq.), which was a great benefit to me while there. His tender anxiety when I was sick and suffering, and his fatherly visit to my bedside at that gloomy period, will never be blotted from my memory or my heart.

But the bright scenes are all past. Death overtook my old friend in the midst of his days, and with his work but half done; but he had not been thoughtless

concerning the uncertainty of life. All letters of importance that he had received were found, after his decease, nicely arranged in packages, and directed, ready to be delivered to the writers.

Suddenly fell the fatal stroke. His death was one of those events which almost unsettle our belief in a universal and unerring Providence. In the full tide of his usefulness, when he was never more valuable to his friends, and when his health was scarcely ever more firm, he was stricken down.

So frequently had he been laid aside, that no alarm was felt when it became known that he was upon the bed of suffering; but that he was sick unto death, was the announcement that quickly followed. The friends who had long enjoyed his confidence and affection hastened to his relief. Particularly the one who had never failed him in times of distress — Miss Catharine Kendall, afterwards Mrs. Steele — was there. To her he whispered his words of hope as he looked forward to immortality, leaning upon the arm of his Saviour. On the evening of his last sabbath, at his request, she sang in his failing ear a favorite hymn. His mind was clear to the last. He ceased to breathe at about six o'clock on Monday morning, Aug. 13, 1838.

At his funeral, a handsome tribute was paid to his character and memory by Rev. Nathaniel Bouton,

D.D., pastor of the First Congregational Church in Concord, who had long been one of his most intimate acquaintances. The house of worship was filled with attentive listeners, all classes deeming it a privilege to share in the honors paid to one whom none knew but to love.

He had no companion or child to be laid by his side in the grave; but the same tender affection which Gen. Joseph Low had so long cherished towards him, now provided his last resting-place. He was laid in the General's own family-lot, near the centre of the southern division of the old cemetery in Concord. The epitaph engraven upon the family monument — eastern face — thus reads: —

JOHN FARMER,

Died

AUGUST 13, 1838,

Æ. 49.

BORN AT CHELMSFORD, MASS.

HONORED AS A MAN,
DISTINGUISHED AS AN ANTIQUARIAN AND SCHOLAR,
BELOVED AS A FRIEND,
AND REVERED AS A CHRISTIAN PHILANTHROPIST
AND LOVER OF IMPARTIAL LIBERTY,
HIS DEATH HAS OCCASIONED A VOID IN SOCIETY
WHICH TIME WILL FAIL TO SUPPLY;
AND THE REASON AND FITNESS OF WHICH,
AS TO TIME, MANNER, AND ATTENDANT CIRCUMSTANCES,
ETERNITY ALONE CAN UNFOLD.

As another evidence of the esteem in which he was held by his friend Gen. Low, there is on the children's side of the monument the inscription, —

JOHN FARMER,
Died June 26, 1828,
Æ. 8 Mos.

This being a child named John Farmer Low.

Dr. Farmer had seen but little more than forty-nine years of life. Many hearts were made sorrowful by the announcement that he was no more; while it is almost an impropriety to say that he was no more, for in his works, and in the hearts of multitudes, he still lives, and seems to be even more than when he was with us in the body. And eyes which have never yet seen the light will bear testimony to the greatness of the benefits he bestowed upon his country and the world.

I am aware of the incompleteness of this memorial. It is the testimony of a single individual only, and one who saw this noble man but a small part of his time. How voluminous and grand would be the account of him that might be written by one who had watched him through all the busy and fruitful years of his life! How bright the light that would shine from the pages! How instructive the incidents, the anecdotes, the expressions of wisdom, that fell from his lips!

XVI.

SURVEY OF FORMER SCENES.

IN the summer of 1882, when my dear old friend had been dead forty-four years, with the saddest of pleasure I visited the scenes which were best fitted to make me feel myself once more in his presence. The store, in the second story of which he passed the first years of his life in Concord, was gone, leaving no marks to show precisely where it stood. Gen. Low's house, likewise, had disappeared before the encroachments of modern business and wealth.

The Breed house I found in a good state of preservation, but not with its old-time appearance. It had obeyed the order to turn its face from the street, to step to the rear, and to become a mere annex of a more sumptuous edifice. But I was politely permitted to enter. There was the same room of former times, and yet it was not the same. A door had been substituted for the window through which the doctor had

hundreds of times looked out upon the people, and the church and its clock; the homelike fireplace had been bricked up; and other changes had been made, so as to render it impossible even for the imagination to make it seem like the temple where, fifty years ago, the prophet of history gave forth his oracles. Scarcely could I feel that *he* was there.

At the former residence of the Misses McClary, my visit was more satisfactory. The room where the doctor wrote and read and slept, and held unheralded receptions, was thrown open to me. It remained almost wholly unchanged. Having passed its modest door, I stood for a moment as if my feet were fastened to the floor. My thoughts were transported back to the days of long, long ago. The very same, I said: there stood his bed, there his stove, there his case of drawers, there his book-shelves, there his table and desk, there the chair in which he sat. Whether I had gone to meet him, or he had come to meet me, I could scarcely tell. It seemed as if we met in a prolonged and affectionate embrace. My heart persistently lingered in the place made sacred by so many sweet and tender associations.

Also I walked the distance of two miles to the place where the doctor performed his last work, and where he died. There again I was entranced. The lady I met with (Mrs. Frye) was a granddaughter

of Mrs. Clark, with whom Dr. Farmer was a boarder. In full sympathy with the object of my visit, and from her own recollection, she pointed out the portions of the room which were occupied by the various articles of the good man's furniture, with the window outside of which he hung his thermometer, not omitting to mention, what affected me most, where stood his dying-bed.

She also conducted me to the upper part of the house, where were stored away many little things adapted to awaken sad memories of my departed friend. There was the light desk which he appears to have procured in his later days, — a mere tablet attached to an upright shaft, and intended to be raised or lowered at pleasure, and to appearance a very uncomfortable substitute for a table. There were many specimens of his handwriting, and among them the original manuscript of his "History of Amherst;" together with a great number of old letters, almanacs, etc., upon every one of which he had doubtless placed a high value.

Nor could I omit visiting his grave. Here I stood in silence, I know not how long. Again and again I read the inscription placed over his mouldering dust by loving friends; and, as I read, my eyes were blinded with tears. Memory never did a more faithful work than then. It was a grand life that loomed up before

me in that hour, but it was a bitter thought that that life came to an end so soon. With an awe-stricken heart, I walked slowly away, through the gate of the city of the dead, out into the living world again.

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